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DADDY  
DACRE'S  
SCHOOL  

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MRS. S. C. HALL

1489-2-10





# **DADDY DACRE'S SCHOOL.**









**DADDY DACKER'S SCHOOL.**

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# DADDY DACRE'S SCHOOL.

*A Story for the Young.*

BY

MRS. S. C. HALL,

AUTHOR OF "UNCLE SAM'S MONEY-BOX," ETC.

"Ah! what would the world be to us  
If the children were no more!  
We should dread the desert behind us  
Worse than the dark before."

LONGFELLOW.

LONDON:

G. ROUTLEDGE & CO. FARRINGTON STREET;

NEW YORK: 18, BEEKMAN STREET.

1859.



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**DADDY DACRE'S SCHOOL.**









DADDY DACRE'S SCHOOL.

think flowers grow in Heaven—don't you think they do?"

"I don't know, I am sure," replied Octavius. "You have been a long time ill, Poole, and that makes a boy grow girlish. It is very like girls to be fond of flowers, and poetry, and all that."

"Well, I suppose it is, Barlow; but I should not wish to lose my love of flowers. Daddy Dacre says that——"

"Well, when are you going to tell us what sort of a school Daddy Dacre keeps?" interrupted Octavius. "You have made quite a mystery about DADDY DACRE'S SCHOOL."

"I did not say Daddy Dacre *kept* a school," said young Poole, laughing a low, soft laugh, which, quiet as it was, had a great deal of fun in it. "I only said Daddy Dacre went to school."

"I thought, from your calling him 'Daddy' that his school-days were over, that he was quite an old chap!"

"If it please God I get better this summer, and grandpapa can have me, you know you are to come and see me, and then I will introduce you to Daddy Dacre."

"I've got it—I see it now!" exclaimed little

Toogood, in an ecstasy ; " I understand it, and I'll do it. Oh, thank you, Barlow, you have made it clear—I shall get on! Oh, I am so glad!" and the little fellow rolled about in his glee.

" Octy, dear," half whispered the sick boy, " you are a happy fellow to be able to help that little Toogood. Willy Home fags him to death, though he won't tell."

" I'll thrash Willy Home," exclaimed Octavius.

" And Jack Stevens," continued Poole, " made him sing an hour in his nightshirt last night, because he said you were a brick, and could learn a lesson as well as any boy in the school if you chose ; for the top boys betted you'd have no 'out' for three days, you are so lazy about your lessons. And because Toogood wouldn't give in, they put him standing on the cold hearthstone, and made him sing for an hour. The doctor and usher were out, you know."

" I'll teach them a new tune," said Octavius, clenching his fist.

" And, Octy, just learn your lesson, that will prove them wrong. Dear Octy," added the boy, throwing his arms affectionately round his neck, " it is a pity you don't keep thinking of one thing long enough for it to do you good. I am but a

sick, weakly boy, but I can see that you don't do yourself justice. I heard the doctor say you looked at things and never saw them. Now that's just what Daddy Dacre says——"

"Daddy Dacre!" repeated Octavius, petulantly, "what can he know about me?"

"Not about you, but about boys in general. Don't look angry, dear Octy, but go now and learn your lesson."

"Oh, it's very well for you to say go and learn your lesson; you little know how hard it is for a fellow like me, with the free use of his limbs, to keep looking at a parcel of hard words, and beating them into his brain, when the sky is bright and he knows all the other fellows are running races with the sunbeams, or fishing, or cricketing. *You* can't understand it, Poole, lying there, crippled, from week's end to week's end, until you forget you are a boy."

While he spoke hastily and rapidly, he did not think how much he was wounding the sickly lad. However people may be "crippled" and speak of it themselves, they do not like its being noticed by others; and there are few greater cruelties than that of alluding to the personal defects of our fellow-creatures. Young Poole's colour rose,

and the word "cripple" brought tears into his eyes.

"If a little confinement is so painful to you, Octavius, what must this long one be to me? Oh, I do not forget sweet liberty! I do not forget the joy of bursting into the fresh air, and racing along the valley, down to the trout-stream, and crossing it—as I may never cross it again—on the stepping-stones; then meeting the breeze, on which my kite mounted, and gathering the same sort of harebells which now grow on poor mamma's grave, and bringing them to her, when her eyes were bright and her cheeks red. Oh, indeed, I have not forgotten, I never shall forget that—nor my Shetland pony, that followed me like a dog. And if I am a cripple, Octavius, you need not tell me so; I know it but too well. When the pain ceases and I forget my affliction, and start off to get something, then the pain returns, and I fall—so helpless." The boy, ashamed of his tears, hid his face in the pillows of the sofa.

Octavius threw himself on his knees beside him, and begged his pardon earnestly and affectionately, while little Toogood thrust his knuckles into his eyes, and sobbed like a baby.

"I know you did not mean it," said Poole;

“but if I were to be always mumping and mourning, it would be so ungrateful to God and my friends; and I am ashamed to have felt so much, for, indeed, you did not mean it, Octavius.” And now will you just go and learn your lesson, and after you have said it, you will have time for a right good race before dinner!”

“Well, Poole, to please you, I won’t take my eyes off the book until I know my lesson! Will that do?”



## CHAPTER II.

OCTAVIUS, full to overflowing of the best, the very best, resolutions, sate down close to Poole's couch; and for at least ten minutes he never took his eyes off the book. Presently a thrush began to sing in a fine cedar which grew opposite the windows. Octavius started; but Poole held up his finger. "I only wanted to see where the fellow was singing," muttered Octavius. Poor Octy!—a few more minutes, and a fierce mewing and quarrelling commenced between two cats on the top of a wall, which was covered with ivy, and had been called, time out of mind, "The Owl's Wall." The truant boy heard the first burst of feline eloquence with tolerable equanimity: his eyes wandered from the book, but he kept repeating the words. Suddenly, however, there was a rush across the lawn; and it was evident that Carlo, the house-dog, felt it to be his duty to see what the matter was, for he passed the window at full gallop; while Ponto, throwing up his cres'

uttered a deep bow-wow, and sprang to the window-seat.

"Flesh, blood, and Virgil can't stand that," exclaimed Octavius, casting the book aside for the second time, and, throwing up the sash, he dashed out of the window, followed by Ponto and Toogood, the latter rolling from the sill of the window on to the lawn. Poole forgot his precepts, and leant forward, but only to see his favourite little cat, who was frequently permitted to share his couch and breakfast, in the jaws of Carlo, who was shaking it ferociously. Poole screamed to Octavius to save his Tawny Tiny; but the result was hidden from him by the animals getting to the other side of the cedar where the thrush, but a little time before, had poured forth its rich music. The lad fell back upon his couch. "Yes," he said, "*now* I feel how hard it is to be a cripple." And child though he was, confused and anxious about his cat, still an idea that had frequently, as it were, played in his mind, seemed to gain strength, and he thought, "As I shall not have the bodily power to do as other boys do, it will be best for me to see how I can get strength in some other way, so as to be useful and help, even while I lie thus." The feeling did not resolve itself into words, but it

ran so through his mind; and at the moment Octavius sprang into the room with Tawny Tiny in his arms. "There!" he exclaimed, laying the favourite on Poole's couch, "I don't think she's more than scrunched up a bit. Carlo has no teeth; and really he only shook her as cats carry their kittens—by the skin of her neck. It was well for her that Carlo is old." Poole thanked his friend heartily; and, despite the excitement of feeling Tawny Tiny all over, and ascertaining the extent of injury she had received, he reminded Octavius of his lesson. Happily his attention was only taken off once more, and that was by something ticking in the chimney; so that both Toogood and Barlow perfected their tasks before the return of their companions.

Octavius seized his cap for a rush into the playground, when the tutor who had heard his lesson called,—

"Barlow, you cannot go out."

"I have said my lesson, sir."

"Yes; but you have disobeyed orders; you left the little schoolroom before you had said it. I saw you setting Carlo and Ponto at the cats."

"I beg your pardon, sir; I was saving Tawny Tiny from Carlo. It is Poole's cat, you know,

sir; and he did scream so when he saw the little thing in Carlo's mouth."

"Was it his scream that made you jump out of the window?"

"No, sir, it was not. I heard the cats on the Owl's Wall, and then I saw Carlo rush over the lawn."

"And you wanted to save the cats?"

"I don't think, sir, I thought much about saving anything; only a fellow can hardly see a dog run, and hear cats, without running too; and I was glad I did run, for if Tawny Tiny had been killed, or much hurt, Poole would have fretted so; and, as *I* fretted him this morning, twice in one day would have done him harm."

"And how did you fret him?"

"By thoughtless words, sir; and he frets when we are kept in. He is such a brick!—I mean, such a real out-and-outer,—so kind and wise. I know I ought *not* to have rushed out; but, as I have said my lesson——"

"And have, I am sure, told the truth."

Octavius coloured at the possibility of his not telling the truth.

"O Mr. Tringham!" exclaimed Toogood, in his innocent half-lisp, "Barlow couldn't tell a story,

sir; he never did, indeed, sir; and his going out was an impulse, not an intention."

"What put that excuse into your head?" inquired the usher, with a smile.

"I heard Poole, sir, the other day say that Octy erred from impulse, not intention."

"I wish his impulse would lead him to learn his lessons," said the usher; "but you may both go. I believe he had no intention whatever of disobeying; but he must learn to guard against those impulses you talk of, my little friend."

I have told you that Dr. Blamire's school was *a home*; and my young readers might have thought so, without my telling them, from the fact that Poole was so happy there. Octavius was not very wrong when he said there was a great deal of the girl in Poole; he had been an invalid from the time he was six years old. An accident at that age rendered him lame—if not for life, for all the younger years of his life; and the death of his parents threw him upon the care and kindness of "his grandpapa, the General," his only living relative.

"The general" was a brave officer, who had returned from India in time to weep over the death-bed of his only daughter; and, as Mrs. Bla-

mire had been a mother to her during the years she spent in England to receive education, her last request to her father was, that her son might be placed with the doctor. "But you will see him during the holidays, papa," she added, "and let him learn to love you, and you will love my little delicate boy; though he will never be able to continue the glory gained by you and by his father in the service of his country. He never *can* be a soldier; but, by God's blessing, he will be a good MAN, and no disgrace to our name."

The general looked at his grandson that night with anything but a feeling of hope. The boy had fallen asleep with his face bathed in tears, and in his dream he was with his beloved mother, so that the pale cheeks and tear-wetted eyes contrasted with the happy smile that played around his mouth. "He is much too handsome and delicate for a boy," muttered the general, whose own features were a series of knobs—his eyebrows rugged, his nose short, thick, abrupt; his upper lip and one side of his face had been disfigured by a sabre wound, which gave a harsh, unprepossessing expression to features that were rather strange and unusual than unkind. He was remarkably erect in his carriage, and whatever he felt, he never

appeared to feel. His grandson moved uneasily in his sleep, so that his profile lay upon the pillow.

"He is so like HER," muttered the general; "so very like what she was at his age—and one arm just so under that beautiful head. Now——" For once his emotions overpowered him, and clasping his hands, he whispered, in a voice hoarse from emotion, "Oh, teach me, heavenly Father, to bear this taking away of my only child as becomes a man—as becomes a Christian!"

It was a happy circumstance for young Poole that he was soon placed under the care of Dr. and Mrs. Blamire, for the general had not been accustomed to children, and had small sympathy with them. He had a hard, abrupt way of commanding when command was unnecessary, and his manner occasionally was sarcastic, and at all times cold. He seemed to expect boys to be miniature men in some things, and children in others. There was one admirable point, however,—he knew he did *not* understand children; he told the doctor he had never understood but one child, and she had been taken from him. Whenever he visited Clearmont he brought a carriageful of toy guns, and drums, and pistols, and flags for the boys, and a number of books for his grandson.

It occurred to the doctor that he might as well look over the books before Poole had them, and he found several that were by no means suited to his age. The doctor judged rightly, that the general had given an unlimited order to the bookseller, and that he had never opened the parcel.

Mingled with young Poole's memory of his mother, his home and earlier days, was the memory of a singular old man whom Poole often spoke of as Daddy Dacre.



## CHAPTER III.

DADDY DACRE had been something more than a servant to Master Poole's papa, recommending himself as much by his quaint odd humour as by his uncultivated knowledge and sterling fidelity. He was sufficiently rich to do without service, but he loved his master, and that master dying immediately after the birth of his delicate boy, "Master Dacre," though he quitted the hall, transferred a large portion of the affection he had borne his master to his dead master's son. Of his master's father he knew personally but very little; but that did not at all signify, it was enough for our good Daddy that he was his master's father, and he looked forward to the "grand old general's" taking charge of "his darling boy" as an earnest which would give him all the happiness his declining years could possibly enjoy.

One of the first words Edward had learned to lisp was "Addy Acre," which for a long time he meant to be understood as "Daddy Dacre."

Major-General Sir Robert Poole in his early days had been connected in some official capacity with the household of his Majesty George III., and had passed more than one summer in attendance upon his royal master in the pretty seaside town of Weymouth, in those days when the Prince Regent and the Duke of York, and all the dukes and princesses were young, and when they used to walk in a stately, quiet fashion on the Weymouth esplanade. Some memory attached the general to this tranquil and charming spot.

The faithful servant of his family was born in the pretty village of Preston, near the town; his few relatives rested in the churchyard of his native village. Perhaps that had induced Daddy Dacre to make his home there, although he did not much enjoy the companionship of his neighbours, who, to confess the truth, were rather inclined to believe Daddy what the Scotch call "daft," which I fancy is half-way between insane and foolish. They did not at all understand why he should like rambling among the hills, which fold one over the other within short distances of the beautiful bay; they wondered why he spent days and days on the rocky island of Portland—sometimes in the depths of those wonderful quarries that send forth such quantities of

hewn stone; sometimes perched on one of the rocks which guard the descending pathway from Bow-and-Arrow Castle to the picturesque beach and its beautiful old chapel; sometimes telling stories to those poor wayside children who have never been taught to read, and who consequently can only gather knowledge through their *ears*, or from the objects with which God has stored this marvellous world, and which, not being taught to observe, they frequently pass "unheeded by."

News spreads very rapidly in Weymouth. Many people there live by letting lodgings; they are always on the watch for strangers, or information concerning strangers; and there are numbers of servants who have nothing to do when their employers' lodgings are not let, and who go chattering from house to house and loitering about the streets and doorways, which I must say is a very bad and profitless habit. Betty runs to Sally, and Sally runs to Betty, and then Betty and Sally run together to Mary, to know if it is true that No. 20 is let to five ladies in fine *mushroom* hats without feathers—not a feather amongst the five!—and Mary says she doesn't know, but suppose they run and ask Elizabeth; and Elizabeth says there are *six* young ladies at No. 20, only one of them is by

no means young; in fact, she is old, and *she has* a feather in her hat! And then they see the kind and courteous basketwoman from Preston, trotting along the road; though her basket is quite full, yet how she trots! and Mary says her mistress wants some "double walls" and green peas; and the basketwoman says "she can't ha' em no ways from her, for that Master Daddy Dacre has *bespoked* every individual thing that grewed in her garden, and all her eggs and poultry, and everything she had, for the whole season, for Major-General Sir Robert Poole, a great Ingee na-bob, who has taken or bought a house on the Esplanade, and would arrive that very day in three carriages; and that Master Dacre was 'in a state,' because Major-General Sir Robert Poole's grandson was coming there for his holidays; and Master Dacre had been own man to his father, and said the young gentleman was such a darling;" upon which the four maids, Betty, Sally, Mary, and Elizabeth, exclaimed in their different voices,—

"Oh, dear, how nice! What a love!"

"I dare say he's a beauty."

"Yes," said the Preston woman, "he *is* a beauty—a most beautiful boy! But, poor dear, Daddy Dacre says he's had an accident, and, as I under-

stand, can't walk, but is obliged to be drawn about or ride a pony."

"Pretty dear! What a pity! Sure it's sad. I dare say he's a spoiled pet," said Sally. "And a little tyrant," observed Mary. "No doubt, Major-Sergeant Mr. Poole," chimed in Betsy, who stammered a good deal——

"I wish," interrupted the Preston basketwoman, who was very erect in her person, and deliberate in her speech, and *more* than particular as to the titles of the "good families" she served,—“I wish *gals* in general would find, somehow, the way to call their betters by their proper titles. ‘Major Sergeant’ is only a soldier; and then you put—as I must say, Betty Crack, you always do—the cart before the horse. Even when speaking of *sub-baltorons* you should give them their proper titles—its sergeant-major, if you please! And sergeant-majors are soldiers—*only* soldiers!—but major-generals are *officers*, Betty; be so good as to remember that, if you please. I should like to see myself carrying such eggs and fruit to a sergeant-major.”

“And what would it matter to you?” said Elizabeth, who was considered the pertest girl in Weymouth, and certainly was more rash than wise

in "tiffing" with the Preston basketwoman, "And what would it matter to you whether your customer was a major-sargeant or a major-general, so you were *paid*?"

The Preston basketwoman cast a look of bitter indignation on the quartette of gossips, and, with a haughty toss of her head, strode more hastily forward than she was in the habit of doing, for her pace in general was slow and dignified.

"Stop!" exclaimed Mary, "don't go away from us because Elizabeth offended you. Stop and tell us more about the general." But the Preston woman stood upon her dignity, and would not be pacified. She went on, muttering about "lazy, low-bred girls wasting time," and expressing her astonishment that "national schools didn't teach manners; that she found the girls more apish and insubordinate now than in her day, and more ignorant. The notion of not knowing the difference between a sergeant-major and a major-general! Let them get news out of her again, that's all."

The three maids, abridged of their enjoyment, fell upon Elizabeth. She ought to behave better than to vex the old woman; they would all suffer for it. She knew more of everything that was going on than all the other Dame Trots put

together; but now they should not get another word out of her during the season. And this, of course, led to a great deal of recrimination and vexation, hard words and ill-feeling; and presently Mary's mistress called sharply to her round the corner to come home, and not stand chattering there. And as she hastened to obey, Elizabeth called her a "white slave," and Mary, with an ill-tempered allusion to Elizabeth's complexion, which was very dark, retorted that it was better to be a white slave than a born nigger. Before Elizabeth could reply, Mary had disappeared, and then she vented her ill-temper upon the other two, who were lounging against the railings, by saying she was served right for having anything to say to such an ugly squadroom.

While those poor girls, who, if well and carefully trained, might have been respectable servants, instead of wild, spendthrift gossips——

What did you interrupt me to inquire about, my little friend, whose eyes have been dancing over these pages?

"How could they be spendthrifts when they, being only poor servant lasses, had nothing to spend?"

Ah, but they had quite as much to spend

in one way as you or I, or any human being:—

**THEIR TIME!** The day was as long to them as a day is to us; and of all spendthrifts—high or low, rich or poor—those who idle, and waste and misapply **TIME** are the most criminal. It is one of God's most precious and generous gifts and yet we are always abusing or ill-using it, and then calling upon it to come and help us.

"If I had but **TIME**," says little Jane, "I would have made my doll's clothes to take on and off." And yet Jane spends at least two hours daily in sucking the thumb of her right hand, doing nothing else.

"If I had the time!" exclaims a wild boy, who is perpetually wasting it—looking out of the window, racing after "Punch," counting the nondescript articles in one pocket, and thrusting them into another, "If I had but time, I'd try to make that sum come right."

And the worst of it is, that those who waste their own time become, indirectly, the means of wasting the time of others. Long ago, when a dear little girl, whom I loved very much then, but love a great deal better now,—when she, instead of doing what she had to do briskly and with earnest-



ness, loitered and lounged over one lesson, and showed her decided hatred of another—looking out of the window, or at the kitten, when she should have been using her time—Did I say *her time*? I made a mistake, it was *my* time, for I paid her master for that precious hour which she was actually trying to waste. And, again, it was her master's time wasted also. And when she left her books about, and her piano open, and her portfolios in disorder, and her drawers in such a state of confusion that it was next to impossible to find anything that was wanted, she wasted my time.

“How?”

Why, of course the time the maid occupied in putting those things to rights prevented her doing what I required, and thus her carelessness was my actual loss, my grief, my vexation. But young things never understand how this is until they grow up, and *feel* how much the carelessness and inattention of other young things disturb and distract themselves.

## CHAPTER IV.

THE anticipated pleasures of the holidays had so multiplied in the estimation of our young friend Edward Poole, that when he forestalled them in his mind, he could hardly credit his approaching happiness. First of all, he was to spend part of every day with Daddy Dacre, and there were to be six weeks of such days ; then he was certain of no end of rambles by the sea-side and amid the villages and little folding hills of Dorsetshire. He would visit the quarries of the island of Portland, perhaps see the interior of the famous castle, which is guarded from inquisitive eyes as carefully as if it contained a roc's egg. Then the breakwater—he wondered what a breakwater was like ! He should be so happy—he should have nothing but pleasure !

“ Nothing but pleasure ! ” Poor little fellow, he remembered his grandpapa ; he loved his grandpapa dearly, dearly, and he knew that his grandpapa loved him ; loved him, that is to say, in a particular



—if he walked more firmly ;  
 carrying but Octavius carried  
 as easily as if he were a  
 room his remaining there,  
 under and the doctor, and  
 general," if he persisted  
 in that absurd manner.  
 "the last day" of "this  
 great bond between the  
 boy—they were both  
 in the habit of talking  
 fellows, saying how  
 his own master, and how glad  
 brother nor sister, nor any  
 of him when he went  
 And then he would laugh,  
 for Octavius had no  
 holidays, so he remained  
 Christmas his kind master  
 happy ; yet Octavius,  
 load, and cord all the  
 and eat somersets,  
 the most vigorous leap-frog  
 back his tears until his  
 swollen lids, yet, I  
 quivering lips, and his

broken voice, as it joined the chorus "breaking up and going away," betrayed his emotion, and he rushed off to his own room, calling Ponto or Joe Creaks ("the boy" of the establishment), or Mary Lodge (the wardrobe woman), until, fairly in his room, after double-locking the door he flung himself upon the bed, and sought relief in words:—

"I have no home! I have no home! Those fellows have all mothers and sisters. Oh, if I could only feel my mother's kiss once more! I have no one to care for me! I should be so thankful to have some one belonging to me, to flog my carelessness out of me! Oh, if I had but my mother—just some one to care for me—or a father, or uncle, or any one—any one belonging to me to thrash me or blow me up—but nobody cares for me!"

He heard the carriages roll off one after the other; the sounds in the house, which had almost realized an idea of a confusion of tongues, died into comparative silence; two or three times his name was called, and Ponto barked and whined after particular favourites; but his head throbbed and his heart ached; he was always in extremes, and he steadfastly believed, for more than three-quarters of an hour, that he was, without compare,

the most miserable creature in the whole world—he did not think there could be a second opinion on the subject. While in this mood, sometimes plunging his face into the pillow, and at other times thrusting his knuckles into his eyes, to crush back his tears (for of all creatures a high-spirited schoolboy is the most ashamed of weeping), he heard Edward Poole coming up stairs; poor Edward's goings and comings were sure to be known by the regular tap-tap of his crutch; this tapping ceased at his door, and his friend's voice, soft and gentle as a girl's, whispered,—

“Octavius,”—“Octy,”—“dear Octy.” At last came a grumbling sort of question as a reply:—

“What do you want?”

“Open the door, dear Octy; I want to tell you something.”

“I can't; I've got a—a headache.”

“I'll cure it, Octy, in one minute; do open the door.”

“I can't—I thought you were gone—I wish you were all gone—it will be so nice and pleasant when you are all gone.”

“Don't tell stories, Octy, but open the door—I shall stand here till you do, and you know how bad it is for me to stand.”

O Edward, you knew the soft place in your friend's heart; there was a rushing, and a chair knocked down, and a splashing of water, and a gobbling sort of sound, with a gurgle and a sneeze or two, and then, looking red and sulky, Octavius opened the door.

"What do you want, Poole? Can't you leave a fellow alone? Look, I'll give you a shilling if you pound me all over with the end of your crutch; it will do me good, and I won't say one word, or raise a finger."

Edward laughed quite merrily, and sat down on the bed.

"I have a good mind not to tell you, Octavius,—I would not for quite ten minutes—if I could help it. I am so happy—it will be so nice! Oh, we shall have such fun, such jolly hours, and I'm not at all afraid of grandpapa now, because—because——"

The delicate, overjoyed child burst into tears, and hid his face in the very pillow that was already wet with those of his friend.

"Why," he said, raising himself, with a look of half-pained surprise, "I think you have been crying—I am so glad you have been crying! I shan't be ashamed, you are so much stronger than

I am ; yes, Octavius, you have been crying. Here, read—it's from grandpapa himself."

While Octavius read, his face flushed and his eyes sparkled, he refolded the letter, and gave it back to Edward.

"Very kind, indeed, of the general ; but I do not see what I have to do with it ; he asks you to bring the boy you like best to spend the holidays with you at Weymouth."

"Well, Octy !"

"Well, Ned, that boy will have a pleasant time of it, and be a lucky chap—that's all I can say."

"Then quick, Octy ! find Mary Lodge, and set about packing your traps at once. Dear grandpapa has sent his valet for us, and I said we would be ready by the next train—just three hours later ; and I've asked the master, and he says 'Yes.' O Octy, dear, shan't we have a jolly time of it, with Daddy Dacre, and the Isle of Portland, and across the bay to Lulworth, and Jonah Fowler—he who sends zoophites all over England ; and I shan't be the least afraid of my dear grandpapa when you are with me. O Octy, you old rogue ! you know well I love you better than any other boy in the school !" and the little fellow threw his arms round his stout friend, who could not restrain his tears ;



and so the two boys cried together, and then looked at each other and laughed. And again and again Octavius splashed his face in the water, and then called the boy and Mary Lodge, and rushed wildly down stairs and into the master's presence, to thank him for the permission he had granted; and his heart being opened, as I trust all boys' hearts are, by kindness, he made a rapid confession of his faults, and poured forth such promises of amendment, that his master, with his very best-tempered smile observed, if he only *did* half of what he *proposed*, he would no longer need to go to school. And Octavius somewhat rashly declared he hoped to be a long time at school, and would never be "kept in" again, or give the doctor or the tutors any more trouble.

And then master and scholar snook hands as cordially as if they were either two masters or two schoolboys, the clear bright Saxon face of the orphan boy glowing with brightness and hope, as if he had suddenly discovered "home, parents, and friends." The reaction was tremendous. As he passed through the hall he encountered the old cook, and seizing her by the shoulders, whirled her round in a mad waltz; then after bidding her good-bye till "next half," he performed a

*pirouette* with Ponto, who strongly objected to being forced to any exertion on his hind legs. He then flew back to his room, but became calm the moment he entered it, for Edward was on his knees packing his trunk, while the dew that glittered on his brow, showed at a glance what the exertion cost him.

Of course he soon put an end to "*that* nonsense;" and long before the expiration of the "three hours" the trunk was packed, corded, and directed, and the two lads and their attendant were *en route* for the nearest station.

## CHAPTER V.

THE house of Major-General Sir Robert Poole, &c. &c., was in the best part of that beautiful esplanade which curves with the bay of Weymouth.

As the evening advanced, the old gentleman became anxious about his expected visitors. The general was always anxious about something. His bodily strength had diminished with his increasing years; but the thinner he grew the more restless and energetic he became. An elderly female attendant—an Irishwoman, who had been his wife's companion even more than her maid—remained in the family, cherished and cared for as if she had been an old Dresden china shepherdess, or an ancient parrot, or a valuable picture—I mean she was looked upon as a highly-respected piece of still life by visitors and servants. And yet she could always calm her “honoured and honourable master;” he was never cold or haughty to *her*; indeed, like all high-born gentlemen, he

treated his dependants with courtesy and kindness, and "Mistress Peggy" received the largest share. She had only to say, "Well, my honoured and honourable master, if my honoured lady had been spared, she would have grieved to see you so put out for such a thing;" or, "My honoured general, it is an east wind. My lady always prevailed on you to avoid an east wind;" or, "Your honour will graciously remember how fond my honoured lady was of Phillip (the old butler, who often got into trouble), and even when he was forgetful, she would say to me, 'Peggy, it is not every one that can remember; he has so many good qualities to make up for what, after all, is not his actual fault, but the fault of his want of memory, which God does not give to every one, that——' But my honoured master knows what my lady would say, and so, sir, I hope you will forgive Phillip!" All this was said in a soft Irish voice, full of tone and tenderness. She was the caretaker and peacemaker of the house—dear old Mistress Peggy!

While the general waited and watched for his grandson the sun had set, and the moon risen behind the woods of Ludlow, to the left of the bay. Mistress Peggy was also watching, in a little

room just off the hall, which the general had given her that she might not be fatigued by the stairs. She heard the general, at last, doubtless wearied by "looking out"—wearied of walking—wearied of sitting—cross the hall, and open the hall door. She immediately sallied forth.

"Your honour would not, surely, go out in the dew—the dew falls heavily?"

"It will do me good to walk in this soft air, I am so anxious about my boy."

"Your honour, then, must put on your coat, if you will go. But my poor lady——"

"There, Peggy, you mistake. Were she here, she would herself be on the watch for her grand-child."

Peggy helped on "his honour's" coat, and stationed herself by one of the narrow windows that flanked the hall door. The railway whistle sung out shrilly above the "hushing" roll of the gentle waters, that floated the pebbles softly along the beach. The bay was as smooth as a lake, and the moonbeams rested like one broad line of quick-silver from the horizon to the shore. The light of Portland and the light at the end of the break-water sparkled brightly, and one by one the houses on "the Nothe" lit up, and lights floated about in

the different mansions along the right-hand side of the bay ; while, on the *left*, the cliffs and indentations were partly lost in obscurity, until the grand old "*White Nose*" (as a promontory is called) stood up like a tower to keep watch over the waters. Beyond were the woods of Ludlow ; but those were almost shrouded by the haze which enveloped distant objects in its softness and mystery.

"It is but a handful of water," thought Mistress Peggy—"It is but a handful of water to the bay of Naples, or the bay of Dublin, and yet how God's glories, the moon and the stars, are reflected in it!" That railway whistle was the signal of Edward Poole's arrival. During the last few miles he had fallen asleep on the broad shoulder of Octavius, and it was beautiful to see how the great strong boy shaded him from the draught of the window, which a perverse young man, with as much beard as the oldest lion at the Zoological Gardens, and, apparently, with as much heart as a spider, would insist, despite the remonstrances of Octavius, in keeping open. It was in vain that Octavius told him how delicate his little friend was, how frequently he had been ill, he only grinned, and repeated,—

"I cawn't—I cawn't."

Octavius earnestly desired to be a man, that he might be able to give him a sound thrashing.

At last they arrived, and got into the general's carriage. When they reached the esplanade, and the beautiful sea view expanded before them, both boys burst into exclamations of astonishment and delight. "If it is so splendid at night," said Octavius, "Ned, my old fellow, what will it be by day?"

"O Octavius, I should wish it to be always so—so calm, so beautiful! Look! oh, do look at that great moonshine on the waters!—does it not seem to be a direct road to Heaven? Cannot you think it like the ladder Jacob saw in his dream; just fancy it with angels going up and down! Oh, do you not wish it were, and that we two could climb it, hand in hand? How sweet that would be!"

"I would rather wait, Ned. But here we are, and I am sure that stately old gentleman on the steps is your grandpapa."

"Yes, yes," replied Edward, nervously; "you are next the door—jump out, Octy."

Octavius did as he was desired, and, with his usual frankness, advanced to the general, and put

both his hands in his. My readers must remember that it was a summer night, and that the only light was from the moon, and the lamp which flickered somewhat dimly over the hall door. Probably the lights confused the general, for, drawing Octavius towards him, with unusual emotion he said,—

“This is, indeed, an unexpected pleasure, my dearest boy. Why, how stout and strong you are grown. I heard how much better you were, but anticipated nothing like this answer to my fervent prayers. Why, you are larger than I *was* at your age!” And, despite the lad’s efforts to undeceive him, he impressed a kiss upon his brow.

“Look at our boy now, Mistress Peggy!”

“Please, sir,” said Octavius, “I am not your boy—I am only his friend!”

It was happy for poor Edward that he did not see the ghastly look of disappointment that changed the expression of the general’s face at this avowal, when he dropped the strong boy’s hands, and turned round to look down upon the slender, half-crouching lad, who had heard, certainly not without a pang, the encomiums passed upon his friend’s appearance.

It was a moment, and more than a moment, of pain to grandfather and grandson.



Edward Poole looked up to the general with an expression so tender and imploring, that, *could he have seen it*, he would have pressed him to his heart at once; but he did not see it. Had he not met Octavius first, he would have been struck by the improvement in Edward, which was really very great; but, at the time, he was only conscious of the contrast, and just held out his hand, which Edward clung to, and kissed, and did not let go until they entered the hall.

As they did so, a shadow crossed the steps, a strange voice interchanged a brief greeting with the footman, and a small active old man, with a light step and a face compounded of wrinkles and puckers—so that, at first sight, it was difficult to determine where the features began and ended—followed the little party.

“Here, Mistress Peggy, are the boys,” said the general, as he passed into the library.

“My own darling!” exclaimed the old house-keeper. “My own darling!—sure I’d known his sweet mother’s eyes and hair among a thousand. My precious! thank God! without a crutch. Oh, the salt *wather*!”—Peggy’s accent and idiom became very national when she was excited—“Oh, the salt *wather* will grow roses on those

cheeks before a month's out! And see here, darling of my heart, here's your own Daddy Dacre just the same as ever."

"And proud to see you without your crutch, Master Edward, and grown so tall," added Daddy.

At any other time Edward would have flung his arms round his old friends; but just then he could hardly speak to either. He felt inclined to both laugh and cry; and when he could command his feelings, he introduced Octavius, and told them how good he had been to him at school, and how kind it was of him to come to Weymouth. And Octavius declared with as much earnestness as honesty, that the kindness was on the other side, it was so good of the general to invite him. He accompanied Octavius into the library, where refreshments were laid, and then stole out shily and awkwardly to Peggy and Daddy; he desired to make up for the coldness he had shown them on his first entrance. The hall was deserted; they were gone. He longed to seek relief in a "good cry," but the "good cry" must be put off; he knew his grandpapa hated tears. He opened the door softly; the sea breeze refreshed him, the whispers of the sea comforted him; he thought the stars more abundant, the moon brighter, than

ever he had seen them before. He returned to the library, and "tea"—that delicious refreshment of all travellers—passed off better than Edward expected. Once his grandpapa fixed his hard blue eyes upon him, and asked him "why he was going to cry?" and Edward laughed, and assured the general he had no idea of crying, though, while speaking, two large tears wandered down his cheeks.

Octavius declared (forgetting the strict mode of expression he had determined to adopt) that "the dear old chap was tired to death with the journey, and the desperate muff who would keep the window down," and the general, with a grim smile, inquired who he meant by "old chap," and what a "muff" was?

Octavius gave his tongue a great bite as a punishment, and explained that the boys at school always called their friends 'old boys,' and 'old fellows,' and 'old chaps.'

"Terms of endearment you consider them, I suppose?"

"No, sir, not exactly; terms of endearment would be like what we might say to our sisters. The fellows call them 'old girls' now and then; only they laugh at boys that are very fond of their sisters, and call them Mollys."

"Very gentlemanly," said the general, sarcastically;—he retained an old-fashioned chivalrous respect for women. "And do they call their mothers 'old girls?' "

"No, sir, they do not; sometimes they call them 'old ladies,' but they oftenest call them 'mothers'—though no boy likes to be told he is 'mammy-sick.' "

The general had a habit of drumming his fingers on the table, and speaking, or rather muttering, his thoughts aloud.

"I ought to be sent to school again, to learn the English language as it now is. And pray, young gentleman, what is a muff?"

"Well, sir, a muff—why, we say that a fellow's a 'muff' when he's soft and sleepy, and coddles himself. Look, sir, a 'muff' is at one end of the gun—the end that won't go off—and a 'fast gent' at the other."

"Then I suppose you are a 'fast gent,'" observed the general, half amused, half shocked, but, on the whole, rather glad, for the first time, that Edward was not Octavius.

The boy looked down, and then frankly up again.

"I should be sorry, sir, to be thought a 'gent,' because I *ought to be* a gentleman; but I should

not mind being a little *fast*. Why, Reginald Raymond has two fast sisters!"

"I am very sorry," replied the general, "for Reginald Raymond's sisters; but, if I were you, I should not be content with being a *little* fast, I should like to be a *very fast* runner. When I was your age, there was not a boy at Eton who could outrun me."

Octavius looked perplexed.

Edward laughed. "Oh," he exclaimed, "Octy, don't you see grandpapa does not understand you. He thought you meant that being 'fast' was running fast. Grandpapa's 'fast' is a boy's 'fast,' *your* 'fast' is a young man's 'fast,' meaning——"

"Meaning what, my little boy?" inquired his grandpapa, drawing him kindly towards him, and smoothing down his brown silky hair, which would curl. "Now, what does it mean?"

"Oh, it means cigars and cut-aways; and—and tell grandpapa, Octy. I am sure you and Raymond used to talk about 'fast,' and how 'fast' you would be when you went to Cambridge. I never can be 'fast,' and I do not care about it."

"Oh," said the general, "then you go to the university to perfect yourself in *fastness*!—that nowadays is the object of a university education.

It is a new system, I suppose, of which I am profoundly ignorant."

Octavius blushed: he was fresh, and fair, and ruddy—just a blushing complexion.

"Oh, no, sir! it is no part of a university education; the dons are all slow coaches; we get fast just for a lark!"

"Edward, what is a don?"

"O grandpapa! great wise men are dons: the Duke was a don, and you are a don."

The old general was not displeased at the compliment.

"And a slow coach, Edward?"

"Octy, who are slow coaches? I do not know so well as Octy, grandpapa——" But at this critical juncture the footman came in to say that Master Dacre was waiting to know if he could be of any use the next morning to the young gentlemen.

"May I go to Daddy, grandpapa?" inquired Edward, whose spirit had revived under his grandpapa's caresses. "Dear Daddy, I hardly spoke to him! And may he come to us in the morning? and shall we have——"

"Yes, my boy, *you* shall have anything you please. I thought I had provided for all the

wants of my young friends; but this 'fast' young gentleman perplexes me."

"O grandpapa, he is not a bit less of a boy than I am; its only a funny way of talking. He is so good to me at school,—such a brave, true friend,—indeed he is; he is as brave as a lion; he would fight the biggest boy in the school for me."

The old general turned away and sighed: he would have been better pleased if Edward had been able to fight his own battles; but afterwards, when he believed all the household were fast asleep, he stole gently into his grandson's room, and, shading the candle with his hand, gazed long and earnestly upon the lovely face of the sleeping boy. What his thoughts were was known only to HIM

"From whom no secrets are hid;"

but, while he looked, his stern, hard features relaxed until they became tender as a woman's,—so Peggy said. She, poor thing, had taken up her station in an armchair at the other side of the bed, and, at Edward's request, sang, in her low, feeble voice, one of the old ballads which had so often soothed his suffering childhood. He was soon asleep, and, to confess the truth, Peggy

"dropped off" also;—she always called sleeping "dropping off."

The general's entrance awoke her; she believed he could not see her behind the curtains, and feared to make her appearance. She knew her master could not bear it to be supposed that he had a tender heart. He was, I am sorry to say, anxious to appear as if he possessed neither feeling nor sympathy, and put himself to great trouble and inconvenience to find out and relieve distress so that no one should discover what he considered a weakness. While the vain people of the world are too fond of placarding their good deeds, the general took as much, if not more, pains to conceal his.



## CHAPTER VI.

"OCTY, Octy! are you going to sleep all day as well as all night? Dear, how sound he sleeps!" continued Edward Poole, while he stood beside the couch of his friend; "he will not see a bit of the beautiful sunrise; it is too bad. I think it so grand, so glorious; and no one is up in the house to see it with me! Octy!" There were tears of positive delight in Edward's eyes.

"What is it, Poole?—has the bell rung?"

"Bell! why, you are not at school. If you make haste, you will just see the end of the sunrise. O Octy, it is so glorious!"

"Glorious be bothered!" exclaimed his unromantic friend, almost inaudibly. "Do go to bed. Sunrise!—why, it cannot be more than half-past four. Fancy a fellow turning out of his snooze on the morning of his first real holiday to see the sun rise at half-past—half-past two, and feeding-time at eight! Go to bed, child—go to——"

And it became evident to Poole that Octavius was again asleep.

Poole thought, "I ought not to have got up and dressed so early, I dare say; but there is no use in my going to bed again,—I should not be able to sleep. I think I will take a walk, or sit on one of those nice chairs, and watch the little waves." He crept down stairs, undid the door-chain, and, after crossing, sat down on one of the seats, which are such comforts to invalids. Edward felt the air so chilly that he regretted having shut the hall-door; he wanted his "pea-jacket." At last he determined to walk towards the Nothe. He had not gone many steps, when, to his delight, he espied his favourite Daddy Dacre coming towards him. Master Dacre was astonished at seeing his "young master" out and alone at such an hour. It was soon explained. If Edward had known Wordsworth's beautiful poem of "The Fountain" then as he does now, he might have applied the first verse:—

"We talk'd with open heart and tongue  
Affectionate and true,—  
A pair of friends; though I was young,  
And Matthew seventy-two."

"There," said Daddy, "that is the house where

the good king George the Third, and all his beautiful princes and princesses, and his stately little Queen Charlotte, kept court. Well, it ~~is~~ an ugly brick house, but the grantees then were content with accommodation which our best tradesmen would turn up their noses at now. It is great wisdom, Master Edward, to be happy at small cost; the more we understand that, the more we shall be able to do for, and give to, our fellow-creatures, and it is having great dignity in ourselves to be able to help and do for ourselves. I beg your pardon, though, for saying that to you, Master Edward: you have not been able to do for yourself, but by God's blessing—you have plenty who are ready and willing to do whatever you want done. They say the good king himself planted that fig-tree; it covers the stables now; but I would just give a good guinea to be able to get up there among the ivy, just under the Princess Amelia's window there, in among the leaves of that grand old ivy. Oh, the wonderful *atomies* hid away between the ivy-boughs that spread their brown feelers over the bricks and grip them so tightly, as tightly as if they had sense to know that so they could withstand the storms—it is wonderful! And then the astonishing bits of living creatures that

shelter behind those shining leaves, and under the very threads of the holdfasts. Ah, how I should like to be a bird or a bat, and live in that ivy for a month!"

"You can't keep school up there, Daddy, at any rate," said Edward. "And do you know, it ~~is~~ such fun, but my friend Octavius believes you are a *real* schoolmaster, and expects to-day to visit your school; tell me, Daddy, shall you keep school to-day?"

"Not to-day, I think, Master Edward; you will both be too restless for school to-day; school must have quiet and calm. You will be wanting to see all Weymouth, and perhaps have a row in the bay. I think the general ordered ponies for you both in the afternoon. If you get tired riding, perhaps you would not mind one of those nice Bath-chairs, and I could wheel you myself."

Edward's cheek flushed; he was beginning to taste the enjoyment which returning strength gives, and was inclined to overtax that strength.

"I don't think I should like the Bath-chair now—I do not think I require it, thank you, dear Daddy. Besides, Octavius might laugh at me."

"O Master Edward, if you wish to get through

the world like a gentleman and a Christian, you must not mind being laughed at. If bad people find out you do not like to be laughed at, they will use that as the strongest weapon against all your good resolutions. Remember, dear, that ridicule is no argument. But, my dear boy, you are up too early; you are looking very pale; you ought to go in and lie down until breakfast. These summer days are long—do go in."

But Edward begged he might sit just a little time on one of the seats and watch the waves, that, so small and delicate, chased each other as if in pure sportiveness.

"I should like to live here always," said Edward, withdrawing his eyes from the scenery, and looking at his old friend. "Always I should like to live here, and have nothing to do but watch the sea, and the sun, moon, and stars. The clouds too, I love the clouds; when I was very ill, I used to gaze at them, and if I looked long, I saw castles and valleys, towers and hills, in them quite clearly; and once I saw angels floating, with outspread wings as white as snow. And once, I have not told it to any one,—but once I thought I saw a shadow so grand and beautiful, as if a greater than angels was passing behind the clouds."

"Bless you, my dear child, I should be sorry you did nothing but watch the sea, sun, moon, stars, and clouds. They are beautiful for a change, always beautiful, as all God's works are; but men are sent into the world, especially young gentlemen like you, well born, and of good name, and rich, to look at the world, and to think of the world, and see how they can do it good, and how they can make it better."

"But, Daddy, that is such a trouble."

"Yes, to you, when you are not well; but by-'n-by you'll know 'no trouble, no pleasure.' And even if it was a trouble, what matter!—those who give trouble must take trouble, and that makes the balance even."

A quiet, sly smile broke over Edward's face.

"I think, Daddy, if Octavius had been up, he would have seen a little bit of your school-keeping this morning."

"No, Master Edward, only had a taste of old Daddy's preaching. But see the servants are about at your grandpapa's; go in now, and lie down until breakfast; and then who knows, if the ponies are tired in the morning, we may open an evening school on the Nothe."

"Where is the Nothe?"

"There, that strip of green hill projecting into the bay, with the coast-guard station at the end, is called the Nothe. Ah, I remember when there was a battery just where the flag stands, of six grand guns; they were removed many years ago, but there are still some cannon left, which are fired on particular occasions."

"Oh, shall we hear them?—do you think they will fire soon?"

"Not until after breakfast," replied Daddy, gravely, "and perhaps not then; they fire on royal birthdays and at the regatta."

"And will there be a regatta—and what is it like? Oh, do tell me, Daddy!"

"After breakfast, Master Edward. Why, bless the dear child, it wants a quarter to six now!"

At last Daddy prevailed, and Edward mounted to his room, attended by the housemaid, who did not fail to express her astonishment how any young gentleman who could stay in bed as long as he liked, so he was in the library at half-past eight to prayers (which was the general's time), would go wandering about, enough to give him his death any day, and looking so sleepy as he did.

Edward denied the sleepiness manfully, and yet he was fast asleep in ten minutes.

The goodnatured housemaid called him soon after eight, and took marvellous pains with his hair and the folds of his necktie—"the general was so particular." She did not fail to inform him that she considered his friend, for all they said below that he was such a beautiful young gentleman, a very great bear. She had taken him hot water, and offered to do anything he wished, and he told her he did not want any girl's help—quite impudent. He had gone down with his collar crooked, and she was glad of it; she knew the general would notice it, he always did, and serve him right. Mistress Peggy would tell him of it if she met him, but she (the housemaid) had watched him all the way down stairs, and no one saw him, so she hoped he would catch it from the general. Edward apologized: "His friend was so kind-hearted—only a little blunt in his manner; he had never been ill, so did not know the value of tenderness, and had no mother or relatives, but he was very kind-hearted. He knew that—what was her name?"

"Rose."

"Well, Rose would be sure to like him, when she knew him better." And then, much refreshed by his repose, he went down to breakfast.



The general intended to be very kind and cordial to the boys, but he had not the art of making the young feel at home.

After a rapid glance at Octavius, he asked him how it was that the housemaid had not arranged his collar properly ; and Octavius was too honest not to confess he had refused to be helped by a *girl*. Upon which the general said that women were to be honoured for their many good and noble qualities, and especially their tenderness and patience, that made them most fit to attend upon *children* ! This put Octavius out ; he was going to avow that he was not a child, but he had not courage to stand up for his boyhood. Then the general held by the old doctrine—that what he called “wholesome English bread-and-milk,” boiled bread-and-milk, was more nutritious for young people than the foreign absurdities of tea and coffee. So the lads had their allotted portions, and their tastes were never consulted.

Octavius had not breakfasted on boiled bread-and-milk since he was five years old. The general saw his distaste to the simple food, and asked him why he did not eat his breakfast.

“If you please, sir, I don’t like it.”

“You will like it after a week or two ; it is

very wholesome. Her gracious majesty Queen Charlotte never suffered the royal children to breakfast on anything else until they were fifteen!"

Octavius took two or three more spoonfuls, casting loving looks towards the cold beef on the side table. But the general's theory was not to be disturbed by Octavius. Edward had grown reconciled to the milk diet prescribed for him long before, and cared for no other. But the stout and strong Octavius, forgetting all his sorrows and loneliness, was indignant at such treatment, and almost wished himself back at school; though that desire faded into thin air at the sight of the ponies, which were announced as ready just as he gulped down the last spoonful of his simple breakfast.

Never were two ponies better suited to their respective riders. Edward's was a sweet, gentle, cream-coloured little creature, called Fairy, with a loveable face, such large tender eyes—more like the eyes of a gazelle than those of a pony; her ears were delicate and flexible, and she had a pretty habit of turning her small head round to be caressed, which was very endearing. She was rather heavy in the shoulder and chest; but the general chose her because of her strength and

safety, rather than for spirit and swiftness. Brittle was, on the contrary, a clean-limbed, strong pony, with a keen, though not *quite* a vicious, eye; and a peculiar way of moving his ears, leaving one standing while he laid the other back. What had been intended as a star on his forehead had grown into a blaze, and I am sorry to add that he possessed three white stockings! But Octavius, declaring his belief that he was a "good one to go," started fearlessly off, and the general observed that he was a brave boy, and rode well, and that he would, if he minded, perhaps, one day make a good cavalry officer. Poor Edward was not able to mount even Fairy without assistance. The general watched his efforts with evident pain, turned away, and walked into the library. Peggy was at the window. She saw what was passing in the general's mind.

"He'll make a fine man yet, your honour!"

"Do you mean a fine horseman?" inquired her master, sarcastically.

"There's fine men, sir—ay, fine, brave, and God-fearing men who never rode a horse. He's got a head on his shoulders, and, please God, there will be plenty in it; and he'll have a heart, your honour, to match it!"

"Poor little fellow!"

"Please, your honour, he's big enough of his age. There's often very little comfort with those great bouncing boys. He's wonderfully like my blessed mistress!"

"Eyes and hair," muttered the general; "and her sweet child-like voice."

"Just it, sir; and it's a blessing to keep even that much of her to lighten this dark world!"

## CHAPTER VII.

OCTAVIUS was a match for Brittle, and Brittle was a match for Octavius. Brittle had spirit, as I have said, with very little vice—but there was a *little*. If Octavius had proved himself ignorant of horsemanship, there is no doubt that Brittle would have treated him with contempt, thrown him into the first ditch they came to, tossed his heels in the air, and scampered off with a triumphant “winnying.” But when he seemed inclined to play off his tricks, Octavius proved he understood what he was about, held him firmly to his duty, and when, at last, he bolted, his rider gave him his head and guided him clear of posts and corners until he was fairly tired; then, when Master Brittle would have taken his ease and recovered his breath, Master Octavius gave him some very wholesome and necessary chastisement, which was inflicted with considerable judgment and good temper. I may as well add, that during our young friend’s stay at Weymouth,

though he rode Brittle *every day*, he had not to complain of his merry, active little steed again.

Edward got on gently and quietly with Fairy. He could not bear violent exercise, and Fairy was not the pony to force him to unnecessary exertion. She was the least bit in the world lazy. Edward would not have had that said on any account; he insisted that her sleepy paces were dictated by a spirit of loving kindness for him and for Daddy Dacre. Then, and ever after, the two boys left the door together; but Brittle and Octavius were soon out of sight, and Edward and his old friend jogged on together, one on ponyback the other on foot. Then Octavius would return at a round trot, and either disturb or enliven them with his mirth, then away again. So that for every mile that Edward achieved, Octavius certainly got over three. The charming race-course on the road to Preston was forbidden ground, which the boys never ceased to regret, they wanted so much to canter there; but it was necessary to keep the turf unbroken, and the general forbade them to attempt to enter the charmed circle.

Daddy was quite right,—the loveliness and novelty of the scene, the sea, the boats, the shops, the ponies—were ever boys insensible to the fasci-

nation of "real living ponies?"—the town, the band, were too attractive and engrossing to permit the idea of Daddy Dacre's school entering their minds. They enjoyed their first day, each in his own particular way, most perfectly, and it was not until the next was nearly over that Octavius suddenly exclaimed—

"Oh, by the way, is Daddy Dacre's school to be visited to-morrow?"

"I thought I would leave you to ask that question," answered Edward, quietly.

"But how can Daddy keep school when he is always trotting about with you, Ned; or is this holiday time with *him* as with ourselves?"

"Suppose we go to his school to-morrow?"

"Very good; but we are not to answer any questions."

"No, Octy. I do not think that Daddy will ask us any questions—do you think he will, grandpa?"

"No, I do not suppose he will; but you may ask *him* any questions you please," answered the general, and his face was always grave.

Octavius had unhappily no organ of veneration—he was very affectionate and frank, prided himself (as uncourteous boys frequently do) upon

speaking his mind, and, without consideration, replied, "There is little chance, I should think, sir, of *my* asking Daddy Dacre any questions, or of his teaching us anything that *we* do not know. I suppose his school consists of a parcel of village children."

Octavius said this rather spitefully; he was somewhat jealous of Daddy's occupying so much of Edward's attention, and he gave this opinion forth in a lofty and decided tone.

Instead of replying, the general smiled at Edward, and Edward was so proud of his grandpa's smile that he returned it with interest. The general never looked at those two boys without thinking if Edward were strong and spirited, like Octavius, how happy he should be. The first day or two Edward's delicate appearance gave him positive pain; but as the boy gained confidence in his grandpapa's kindness his mind expanded, and as his small, beautiful features yielded to the emotions of that mind, the general's opinions and feelings changed, until he found himself watching with intense interest the development of a nature which he greatly rejoiced in believing was as pure and noble as he could desire. Still, as an old cavalry officer, he would have been glad if Edward could



have mastered Brittle and preferred him to Fairy. As a set-off, he strongly disapproved of the free and easy manner of young England, and questioned whether Octavius was worth the lesson he half determined to read him.

"And so you think Edward's old friend Dacre can give you no information?" said the general.

"I do not think it likely, sir."

"You must have made excellent use of your time, young gentleman. I had a letter only this morning from a very learned professor at Oxford, who requests me to ask Dacre's opinion on a matter in which he feels much interest, and requests his advice."

Octavius opened his great round blue eyes in astonishment.

"Are you joking, sir?"

"I never joke," replied the general, turning away.

"Dear grandpapa, Octavius did not mean to offend you," interposed Edward; "he does not know anything about Daddy's school. He has no idea of its extent, or the extent of my old friend's knowledge."

"I am sure it's a do and a sell," persisted Octavius, but in an undertone; "he cannot speak *ten words of English* correctly."

"Then he has profited by your society, young gentleman. Will you inform me what a 'do and a sell' mean, and if you consider that mode of speech 'good English?'" inquired the general, who advanced from the other end of the room, and hung over Octavius like a thunder-cloud. "Can you tell me to what mood or tense those words belong? How do you employ them—as verbs active or passive? From whence are they derived? A do! Has your 'do' anything to do with to be, to do, or to suffer? When you say 'a sell,' do you mean a sale, or did you intend to say 'to sell?'" Did you mean it as a mercantile observation—"to do and to sell;" and what had such a 'do' to do with our good friend Dacre? Will you explain, young gentleman? You cannot? Then I think that to-morrow morning you had better go to Daddy Dacre's school, and to-morrow evening you shall tell me if you still consider it impossible to acquire knowledge from him. I shall most likely avail myself of the opportunity to ask about one or two matters, certain of receiving the information I desire."

Octavius privately informed Edward that he could not make it out!—the general took all the *shine* out of him; and that, as to Edward himself,

he *shut up his trap* in a very unfriendly way. Why couldn't he tell at once what he meant—"where's the odds?" he should know it all to-morrow!

Edward laughed, and Octavius very nearly lost his temper.

## CHAPTER VIII.

"AND now, lads," said the general, after breakfast, "time is up—quick march to the trenches! I wonder, can you hear the school-bell ringing as you go along? Edward, I have ordered a chair for you; you are not yet able to take such a walk, and attend to your studies afterwards."

"How kind and considerate you are, dear grandpapa, for your poor weak boy. But I really think it would do me good to walk; I would rather walk."

"If you could, I am sure you would," replied his grandpapa (the old general's smile was very sweet); "but you cannot. You must think, Edward, of the old soldier, who has nothing left but you."

Edward seized his hand, and kissed it, saying—"I will do whatever you wish—I will, indeed!"

Octavius, no matter what *he* felt, always treated every semblance of feeling in others with contempt, from an idea that it was manly to do so.

And when the old nurse thrust "a comforter" into Edward's pocket, and put a bag of biscuits in the chair, he muttered something in which the word "bosh" only could be distinguished, and rushed along the esplanade, as you have seen a young, high-spirited dog, just unchained, toss himself here and there, in the wild exuberance of his glee—now springing down the steps on the shingle, then (for it was nearly low water) tearing along the hard, firm, bright sand, to meet the wavelets, or to chase them, dashing shoe deep into spray, quite careless of, or, perhaps, not knowing the destructive effect that sea-water has on leather—the breeze shedding deep red roses on his cheeks. At last, he stooped to pick up something that had arrested his attention, and then flew, with a "whoop-whoop," to Edward.

"What is it, Ned? It looks like a lump of——; no, it looks like an enormous fat strawberry—much larger than those the doctor obtained a second prize for at the what-you-may-call-it society. You will hardly believe that that great, soppy-looking thing, when I saw it first, was one bunch of leaves—I don't mean tree-leaves—it was, indeed, just like a crysanthum-derry (Octavius never waited to remember the proper name for

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anything, he was always in too great a hurry to wait for the word), and now it has put them all in—done itself up in a sulky! Oh, I wish you had seen it—it was so like a flower. I wonder could I make it put out its leaves again,” and he gave it a poke, which made it close up tighter than ever.

Edward was as much delighted as Octavius. When he had previously attended Daddy Dacre's school it was kept in an inland village, for wherever the general “pitched his tent,”—although Daddy considered Preston his home—he was certain to be found in the neighbourhood. Peggy and Daddy were such true friends, that the general, who never descended to a joke, suggested once, that he thought they ought to marry—or, rather, to have been married to each other forty years ago! He was quite in earnest when he said so.

The chairman was appealed to by the boys about what they considered a wonderful thing. Did he know what it was?

“Yes; when he was a lad he used to call the like ‘sea flowers.’”

“No, no,” said Octavius; “I know better than that. Our own old woman at the doctor's has a

picture over her chimney-piece, which I always look at when I am on the sick list and sit by her fire with my feet on the fender and a bowl of sweet gruel on my lap. The picture consists of all sorts of sea-weeds in a queer little fairy basket. They are stuck out and gummed on paper, and underneath is written—

“ Oh, call us not weeds,—  
We are flowers of the sea.”

So, of course, those are the real sea-flowers. This lumpy thing is more like a fruit of the sea,” added Octavius sententiously.

“ Perhaps,” suggested the chairman, “ if it be a fruit, the young gent would like to eat it ? ”

Octavius became even more rosy, and casting a fiery glance which fell harmless on the chairman's back, he said, “ I am a gentleman, not a gent.”

“ As you please, master,” was the cool reply ; “ gent is the first syllable and man the last, that's all. You're not up to both yet, are you, young master ? ”

Octavius pretended not to hear.

Edward was wheeled on and on, past the king's house, past the monument, past the library, past the peep at the quay, where the old ships are drawn up in what seems such irregular disorder,

past the little green which contrasts so charmingly with the blue waters of the bay—on and on to the left, the sun shining on the distant glories of White Nose, the flag floating from the highest ground of the Nothe; and now the chair draws up, and there is Daddy Dacre ready to receive them at the Ferry, for they must either go a very long round or cross the ferry to arrive at the Nothe. Octavius forgot to continue sulky, spang into the boat, and wanted to row, so the ferryman gave him an oar; but he soon “caught a crab,” and nearly overbalanced himself into the water. This quite restored his equanimity—he laughed, and called it a “jolly go,” and the old sailor laughed also, and called him “a brick.”

As they crossed the smooth little inlet, Edward observed a queer-looking boat, from which depended a number of wooden boxes, of all shapes and sizes, that went bobbing about in a very odd manner; a short, thick, weather-beaten sailor seemed keeping a sort of guard over them, and Daddy sung out—

“Good day, Master Jonah; these young gentlemen will come to you soon—they wont be able to do without you. They’ll be wonderful customers.”



"What does he sell?" inquired Octavius;  
"gingerbread or ginger pop, or both?"

The men laughed.

"Let's have a row round the bay," suggested Octavius.

"Not before school," replied Daddy Dacre, looking very prim and particular.

"Oh, no, not before school," echoed Edward, clapping his hands—"not before school."

Another moment, and they landed. Edward Poole got up the cliff steps beautifully, and, to his great delight, there was Fairy, in charge of the general's groom, quite ready to receive him.

Octavius ran, and shouted, and jumped—the clear, cool, delicious breeze on the Nothe quite refreshed him. He raced over the green sward with as much glee as he had raced over the sands; and while Edward's pony quietly mounted the hill, stopping every three minutes to pluck a mouthful of the soft, sweet grass, Edward enjoyed the extensive view and felt quite impatient to arrive at the summit, which Octavius had already reached, and was capering like a harlequin, and shouting with the voice of a stentor.

"Oh, Daddy," said Edward, "I am sometimes sad when I see how, without such help as I have,

boys do much more than I can. Here's Fairy's four legs won't do as much as Octavius's own two!"

"It's God's will, Master Edward, and you ought not to take on that way, but be thankful that you are so much better than you were," replied Daddy; and after all—though, bless the young gentleman, he does run fast, yet hares and rabbits and dogs, and a hundred other creatures, can beat him, so mere swiftness is no great thing to boast of; bless you, a whirligig goes twice as fast."

"Oh, but I remember the enjoyment of a good long race," replied Edward, and his eyes filled with tears.

"And now you have the enjoyment, master, of a good long ride—is it not so?"

Edward felt as if he had done something wrong, and he was ashamed of repining, so he urged Fairy into a canter, and had nearly arrived at the highest part of the promontory, when he saw Octavius—who had stepped backward to avoid a breach of the peace with a heifer that resolved to dispute his right to cross the path—disappear over the brow of the cliff.

While Edward urged Fairy to a still more rapid pace, he turned round to look at Daddy, who did not appear at all concerned, but came slowly on,

his hands resting one in the other on his back, after his usual fashion. Poor Edward feared his friend was dashed to pieces on the rocks, or struggling in the sea, and wondered at Daddy's apathy; but Daddy knew that the Nothe does not descend what is called "boldly" to the sands; on the contrary, it pretends, at first, to make a great rush downwards, and then comes to a dead stop, and throws out a soft, grassy platform, where sheep are fond of browsing and gazing upon the water; then that descends again into broken ground, where gorse, and heath, and little thick, stumpy plants, that do not care for

"Winter and rough weather,"

flourish; after that, some portions of rock show their brown noses through the thin grass and wiry rushes; and lower down are tufts of sea-pinks, and other salt-loving plants, whose names I do not know, though they have been my familiar friends since my childhood.

Octavius was seated on the first platform minus his cap, which a sagacious-looking old ram was investigating at some little distance, while three or four other "fleecy creatures" were huddled together gazing at Octavius, who, looking up, shouted to Edward,—

"Isn't this a jolly go!—but there are no bones broken. Bother the cow!—I'll teach her better manners next time! It's a pretty thing to allow such cattle to go at liberty—nasty horny things!"

When Edward saw his friend was safe, he was too much engrossed by the beauty and extent of the view to take much note of his movements. Portland Island lay to the right in all its dignity, and St. Alban's head and Lulworth on the left. The steamer for Lulworth was crossing the bay, and the busy little one that plies so industriously from the Nothe to Portland had its steam marvelously up, and was rushing on its way, leaving a frothy track behind. Numerous little boats dotted the sea, some with swelling sails, others trusting to the strength of their brave rowers.

Edward did not know why, but his eyes filled with involuntary tears at all this beauty; and he was very glad that Octavius immediately engaged in single combat with the stout old ram that had taken such a fancy to his cap (whenever Octavius saw tears in Edward's eyes, he called him "Miss Neddy"). Having recovered his property, he stormed the battery, and expended much eloquence in endeavouring to persuade the man in authority there to fire one of the guns, but

his persuasions were treated with contemptuous silence, which offended him mightily; and as Edward and Daddy were proceeding slowly in the direction of the old ruins of Weymouth Castle, Octavius followed, not much impressed by the magnificence of the scenery, but rather intent on "shying" stones over the cliffs or at the cattle. This last practice brought the wrath of the cow-keeper upon him, and if Daddy, who was well known to every one, had not interceded, he would have taken the law of retribution into his own hands. Octavius subsided into sulkiness, and seemed to find pleasure in knocking the blossoms off the wild plants, and sticking his cane violently into the sward. When they got on the beach, Octavius suddenly exclaimed,—

"Daddy, where *is* your school?"

"There, master."

"Where?"

"There, my master."

"What, on that rock?"

"No, Master Octy, just under it—t'other side."

They were pattering and trotting on the firm sand, from which here and there sprung, in a defiant manner, small heaps or detached fragments

of rock, generally covered with the brown tangled "sea-wrack," with its shining pendant tassels and oily globules; some were "starred" by thousands of tiny limpets, and frequently surrounded by shallow little pools of sea-water; for my readers must remember that the "tide was out." Sometimes, amid the brown weed, was a delicate patch of *ulva*, its broad, lettuce-like leaves floating in the pools, or resting on the sand, where long locks of the lovely green weed, so fragile and delicate, called by the seaside children "mermaids' hair," were tangled in the sand, as if some fair mermaid was buried beneath its undulating surface.

The particular rock that Daddy had pointed out was soon reached, and there Edward dismounted.

Octavius burst into a loud laugh.

"Do you call *this* a school?"

"I do, master."

"And where are your scholars?"

"I have only two as yet; but I expect a third. Ay, there he is. Come, Santy, make haste, my boy."

A juvenile shrimp-gatherer, with his professional pole and net hanging over his shoulder, and the remnants of his trowsers rolled up over his knees into two turbanlike folds, pattered along, spring-

ing over the pools and clearing rocks at a bound, approached them rapidly.

"Where are we to sit?" inquired Octavius.

"O, master, I provide sights, and not seats."

"I say, Ned, this is too bad; it's altogether a sell, as I said it was. Why, there are no books!"

"I beg your pardon, Master Octy, but there is always, thank God, a great book, open, wide open, before every living creature,—I mean, every human creature,—a book opened by the Almighty himself" (he raised his hat reverently while speaking),—"God's great book, second only to that blessed volume which now every mother in England is able to give her child; and this other book, a leaf of which you may read this day, is open to rich and poor, as Master Edward knows; for, every vacation, and before he went to a London school, there were odd times when he came to *my* school and learned to read,—the only book I have been able to read during my whole life. Sometimes it was in one place, sometimes in another; for wherever he was, *I* was, though

"My home is by the sea,"

as the old song says. Come, Santy, what have you got in the net, and what news for us?"

"Is this our fellow-pupil," inquired Octavius, rather haughtily.

"One of them, young master; but don't be ashamed before him; he knows a great deal more than you do on our first subject, as I call it; but don't be shy, Master Octy. When you read the **GREAT BOOK** awhile, you'll soon get up to Santy; and don't you be uplifted, Santy, my man, because you know so much more than these young gentlemen; they have not had your advantages, boy,—bless you! they have lived half their time in a town, not like Weymouth, but a regular boxed-up town,—houses all of a row, and no country; and, instead of reading page after page of the **GREAT BOOK**, they have been getting on with bits out of it here and there,—nothing regular like. Why, there's that fine young gentleman never fetched a crab out of a hole in his life!"

Santy grinned: he had a very wide mouth,—so wide, that it seemed to divide his face.

"Master," he said, "there's a prime one in that hole!"

Octavius sprang forward. "In which hole? Oh, do let me have him out—I should so like; where—where is he?"

Santy dashed about ten yards over the firm sand



and then into a tide-pool more than knee-deep, lifting up some brown seaweed which grew on the rock and hung over the entrance to what Daddy Dacre called "Crab Castle." "They are knowing old fellows," he said, "those crabs."

"But I see him—I see him," shouted Octy, who had closely followed in great delight. I am sure he is asleep; his claws are folded tight, and he could not, I am sure, do me any harm. What do you want with a great stick, and a hook at the end," he continued, indignantly. "Keep quiet, boy, can't you. Why, any fool could put his arm in and pull him out; it is as easy as counting two; you should have brought a plank to lay from rock to rock. Will you let that crab alone, young chap?—just wait, and I'll tuck up my trowsers. If you had only brought a plank; but I do not fear sea-water."

And as he spoke, with a bold and confident air, Octavius plumped into the pool. "Why, what a spoony you must be," he said, addressing Santy, "to want a thing like that to pull out a sleeping crab!"

"Take care," called Daddy Dacre.

"You don't know who you have got to deal with," said Edward.

But Octavius's arm was in the hole, and a

triumphant flush on his cheek, that was soon deepened into crimson, as he screamed with agony, "Oh, he's got hold of my thumb,—he's crushed my hand against the rock. Oh, save me—save me!"

"Don't pull against him—don't pull against him;—leave your hand quiet, and he 'll not pinch half so hard. If you will be quiet, master, you 'll feel him let go a little."

"Break open the rock—poke him with the pole!" vociferated Octavius; "punch him!—I know he 'll cut my thumb in two!"

Daddy by this time had seized hold of the young gentleman's arm, keeping it quiet by force. He struggled in vain. "Well," he exclaimed, at last, "I think I could get it away now—quite away. What is the crab doing now?"

"He is ascertaining if your thumb is fit to eat." Octavius gave a sudden jerk, which was followed by as sudden a pinch; then there came another scream.

"Will you keep still?" said Daddy Dacre, quite provoked. "You are as bad as a babby,—a two-year-old could do as he was told."

"You said he was going to eat my hand," more than half-sobbed Octavius.

"No, master, I told you he wished to learn if your thumb would make good crab's food, and he proved that he did not think it would when he let it go, ever so little ; but he knows you are an enemy, for all that. Santy, push in the hook gently under the young gent's arm—so" (another scream from Octavius). "Now, on again, with a strong good will;—that's it. Master crab will find another enemy."

Octavius danced with positive pain ; then, suddenly withdrawing his hand, he fell back against the rock ; but for its support he must have fallen into the water. Poor fellow ! his thumb was greatly bruised, and the back of his hand lacerated. He suffered great pain, for he became quite white.

Daddy lifted him on to the sand, and washed his hand, while Edward sympathized with him ; and Santy threw the crab triumphantly on his back, where he struggled and threatened all who came within his reach.

"If," said Octavius, half sobbing, "this is Daddy Dacre's school, I do not like having a crab for an usher."

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## CHAPTER IX.

THE party stood round another little tide-pool, about twenty yards from Crab Castle.

"Now, young gentlemen," said Daddy, "rest yourselves on the sand, or on the rocks, as I do. This is my SCHOOLROOM!"

"What?"

"That pool of water shimmering in the sunbeams will be my schoolroom to-day; for mine, Master Octavius, is a wandering establishment,—here to-day, by the side of the wide ocean,—to-morrow, perhaps, in the swannery and decoys of Abbotsbury; the next day it might be in the beautiful place called Osmington, where you can hardly tell which is the garden, which the churchyard. I have kept school at Corfe Castle, and have many schools in the Isle of Portland, that's now shining so bright right before us. I have kept school amid the wreck of a gallant ship cast upon pebble, or, as Santy would call it, "pobble," ridge. I have——"

"Oh, take us everywhere," interrupted Octavius.

"You are a dear old fellow, after all!—and I would rather read with you, out of your book, and in your school, than out of any printed book in England."

"The young folk do say so," said Daddy, with a flush of pleasure on his cheek. "And now attention, please, there! Master Edward has laid down on the sand, and is gazing into the water."

"What do you see, Ned?" inquired Octavius, eagerly.

"How beautiful it is!" said Edward; "the water is so clear that I can count the pebbles on the sand, and see the clouds reflected as they pass; and the rocks at the sides are covered with baby-limpets, and tufts of the most beautiful seaweed, of different shades and colours—quite a sea-forest. O Octavius!—hush!—look!—there are one, two, three, of the beautiful scarlet things you found on the sand—living Queen Margarets—only ten times more beautiful."

"Hands off!" exclaimed Daddy to Octavius, who was about to plunge in his arm to seize a glowing sea-flower, which his eye had caught blooming through a clump of brown tangled weed,—  
"hands off! I want you to learn to see. I must not have my sea-flowers disturbed; what you want you can get from Jonah; but my schoolroom must

not be robbed of its treasures. If you took them it would be taking the leaves out of my great book. If you seized that one, now, you would startle twenty others, who would close their *tentaculæ*—what you call their leaves—in a moment. Some of them are so timid, that, if but a shadow crosses the water, they shut up instantly. Santy, you know pretty well the names and habits of the creatures.”

Santy grinned, and shifted from one leg to another, seeming much pleased at the compliment.

“Are those the same sort of things which the doctor told us were to be seen at the Zoological Gardens?” inquired Octavius, now thoroughly interested.

“The same. Why, that sailor, Jonas, so rough and so rugged, whom you saw at the Ferry, sends hundreds of them to London, not only to the Zoological Gardens and to the dealers in this new pleasure, but to many ladies and gentlemen, who, living, poor things! in towns, have not me to keep school for them, and so must be content to get a leaf now and then out of the great book of nature, and spell it out for themselves.”

“I can count one, two, three, four, five scarlet ones,” said Edward, “and two greens; and look,

there are some at the bottom, like mushrooms, or great brown auriculas."

Daddy took a long piece of wire in his hand, and calling upon Octavius to observe, directed the wire down towards the full-blown disk of one of those which Edward had called "auriculas." Before the wire touched the creature it had almost disappeared—nothing remained above the surface but a little brown knob, like a very small nut or pebble.

"Where are its eyes?" inquired Edward.

Santy laughed. "It hasn't got eyes, master."

"Then how did it see the wire?"

"It *knowed*"—meaning it had a sensation that we cannot understand, without seeing, was the reply.

"It knowed!" repeated Octavius, contemptuously. "Daddy, why don't you teach that boy grammar?"

"Because, young sir, I do not know grammar myself, nor never did. But you see how it is. Suppose you were a poor lad, and I another poor lad—you know something and I know something. If we put our knowledges together we could help each other, as the ant said to the bee."

"Oh! look, look!" shouted Edward, in ecstasy; "there, sidling along, is a young crab or lobster,

or something very like one, with a shell—the same sort of shell we hear the sea in—on his back ; and oh ! wonder, wonder ! on the shell, which is his house, is a great creature, a striped creature in full bloom. No—but watch, watch. Crab, in scuffling about so awkwardly, has knocked the creature against some weed, and it has gathered itself down into a lump ; and now crab has got something. Oh, he holds it as we do bread and butter, and is feeding himself with his hands ! ”

“ Hermit crab,” said Santy, sententiously ; “ hermit crab, with parasitic anemone on his shell.”

“ And why does he go into a shell he was not born in ? ” inquired Octavius.

“ For protection, sir. Just as you might step into a castle. He never was born in a shell, sir ; he has armour on his face and hands, but a soft, naked body with a hook at the end, and without e'er a jacket, and so he puts his body into the first empty shell he finds that suits him, and hooks himself into it so cleverly ; and when he grows too fat for that, too much of a man like for his first jacket, he seeks out another shell, turns it round and grapples it, then turns himself round, and then pops into his new house, and hooks himself there, in



ease and comfort, to enjoy his new property. The anemone doesn't much mind the knocks and blunders of her landlord, for Jonah says she gathers up the scraps and fragments of crab's feasts, and lives better than if she lived like the others on a rock."

"She's a hanger on," said Edward; "I like the independent fat red ones better."

"I say," observed Octavius, "isn't the jackall called 'the lion's provider?' why not call the anemone par—something—the crab's provider?"

"No sense in it, sir," said Santy the plain spoken, "because it's crab that provides for parasitic."

"Look, look!" again exclaimed Edward, who was every moment discovering the population and variety of the inhabitants of the tide-pool, and enjoying the novel scene, as Columbus enjoyed the discovery of a new country. "Look, look! is that a shrimp?"

"Possible," said Santy. "Wild, active things they are, and handles their oars beautiful. No one would ever believe it who only knew them"—(I am sorry Santy pronounced boiled *biled*, but he did)—"no one could believe what sportin' things they are who only knew them *biled*."

The lads hung over the tide-pool in ecstasy.

Nothing could exceed their delight. Edward observed and questioned, Octavius shouted and exclaimed, and put his opinion forward, as if he had the knowledge which, poor fellow! he could not have.

"Well, now," said Octavius, when his excitement had subsided, "I wonder why those creatures were made—can you tell?"


"No, master, I cannot," replied Daddy, gravely. "I only know that if He"—the old man again lifted his hat reverently—"if He who made all great things had not thought it right to make all small things as well, they would not have been made; and nothing is made unnecessarily—there is no waste in the work of God's hand. I am but a humble man, Master Octavius, and this poor Santy—why, he is, to all lookers on, a very poor, ignorant boy; and yet he has such knowledge of these creatures, in finding them and telling about them, that he is able to keep his little brother and sister in food and *raiment*, and at school, and goes to church—wild and ragged as he looks now—goes to church in broad-cloth! There's not a thing can creep along the coast unknown to Santy. Why, I remember when these creatures were reckoned among sea-weeds and mosses, even by wise men; and you young

gentlemen, for all your schooling, have only just heard of there being a show of them at the Zoological Gardens up in London. And yet, sirs, God's great sea is full of such wonders. Take care, Master Octavius; that beautiful thing, with the light body and——"

"Oval disk," put in Santy, who liked to show his acquaintance with fine words and proper names.

——"and his slender tentacles curving and twisting about, is a beautiful *anthea cereus*. Please don't touch him, master; if you like to have such things, I'll get you a proper glass jar and a *speciment* of everything you see there, and show you how to manage them; but this particular tide-pool, as I have told you, I call my book, and I say again I don't like to have the leaves, you understand, torn out of it. I like to have them to show to the young gentlemen or ladies, the boys and girls, who come to my school."

"The *anthea cereus* stings some people so as to make their hands tingle for an hour," said Santy. "I hear it's out of the tips of their long fingers they throw pison; and I know that sometimes if they cast one round a little fish—any of those small blennies you see darting about—even if it gets



away—which, if it is a very little one, it cannot do—it will *squaggle* about and die.”

“But I want to take home some of those,” repeated Octavius.

“I can’t have them disturbed,” persisted Daddy. “My pupils must do as I bid them. You shall have some like them, but not those. It would take you many a lesson to know these things by their names. I remember when children had no amusement after their morning’s dip, beyond a race on the shore or the cliffs, but digging the sand up with wooden spades and, may be, picking up seaweeds and shells; but now they are daily finding out God’s wonderful works in the waters. Suppose these things only the beginning of life—how wonderful to think of the links of the chain, ending, for this world, in our own life. God does not despise the work of his hands. If He who made us thought them worth creating, surely we may think them worth observing.”

“I could look in that tide-pool for ever,” said Edward; “but I want to know, Daddy dear, if all those creatures came there of themselves, or if *you* put any of them there?”

“Well, Master Edward, you understand that there are actinia belonging to different depths of

water, as well as to different shores. Now keep quiet, if you please, and just look, for what I am going to show are as timid as hares. Do you see anything there, in that corner? I like to fence that beautiful bunch of *serpula* with great stones, because they don't grow just here. I don't wish the tide to wash it out. They grow along the bottom of the bay, and the dredgers haul them up, and I love them for their beauty. Watch how they entwist outside their tubes, and spread out their little plumes in the water. Some are pink, some buff; there is one bright scarlet. Are they not beautiful? I got them from Jonah. Nothing on sea or land surpasses the *serpula* in beauty. Ah, Master Octy! I never did see such a fidgety young gentleman as you are in all my life—I never did. Couldn't you keep your arm quiet? Its shadow frightened them, and they have withdrawn their plumes and closed up their show-box. There, Master Ned, down deep, is a piece of rock covered with madrepores. We have none along this coast; a gentleman brought me that great piece from Ilfracombe. They are plenty along the North Devon coast, and petrifications of them are cut into beautiful things in Devonshire—paper weights, and penholders, and I don't know what. Here is a

piece polished; but I like them best living. Stars of the sea I call them, and others call them stars of the rock. Oh! my dear young gentlemen, I hope the older you grow the more widely you will open your eyes to the wonderful works of the Almighty, for indeed they are wonderful!"

"The tide's turned long ago," said Santy, "and when once Master Dacre begins *pracking* over the wonders of his tide-pool, he never minds the ocean."

"You saucy sea puppy," exclaimed the kindly old man, "is that your gratitude for all the knowledge I have given you?"

Santy ran back laughing, and resumed his shrimp-net.

"Bring all your shrimps to my grandpapa's," said Edward, "and nurse will buy them all."

Santy bowed and capered, and was soon out of sight amid the seething, murmuring waves that flowed on and then retreated, as if they were really going back, when, in fact, they were every moment gaining ground,—retreating, as it were, an inch, and advancing ten inches.

The boys could talk of nothing but their newly-acquired information. When they arrived at the ferry, Octavius saw a boy with an eel about eight

inches long, and desired to have it immediately for the vivarium he proposed establishing ; but Daddy told him that neither eels nor crabs should be admitted, because they devour their fellow-captives. Edward, whose usually pale cheek was flushed by the sea breeze and excitement, commenced a negotiation with our old acquaintance Jonah Fowler for the purchase of the contents of all his sea-cages ; but Daddy reminded them that there were certain preliminary arrangements to be taken into consideration,—first, grandpapa's permission was to be obtained to introduce a vivarium into his house ; then a deep glass milk-pan, or a large globe, was to be purchased and well seasoned with sea-water ; then sand, shingle, a few bits of rock and particular sea-weed was to be introduced, and then the creatures. This was a great trial of patience, requiring much forbearance from young gentlemen who wanted a miniature sea well stocked before sunset !

“ O dear ! ” exclaimed Daddy ; “ I must keep school again and again among the rocks and on the sands before these two pupils will come to my school at the Swanery ! ”

## CHAPTER X.

THE following day, and the following, and the day after that, Daddy Dacre could not open a regular school anywhere. He tempted his pupils by a proposition to keep school in one of the quarries at Portland, and attend almost exclusively to geology, or to visit Chesil beach, and hear all about a great shipwreck. This same shipwreck was a decided temptation, for he promised to open school on the very spot where the ship had been cast ; but, no—Edward had grandpapa's permission to "set up a tank" in nurse's sitting-room, provided its being there did not annoy *her* in any way, for the general, while he expected the most unvarying obedience and attention from his servants, conceived it to be his duty to protect them ; and, above all, he respected the sanctity of their own rooms. He would not have entered the house-keeper's or butler's little sitting-rooms without knocking, on any consideration, and he insisted on the young gentlemen doing the same thing. Octa-



vius got into great disgrace at breakfast the morning after his first introduction to the wonders of the deep, by saying that the old Irish nurse looked "a funny guy in her night-cap." The general, of course, knowing that nurse was never seen in public in her "night-cap," inquired how Octavius had ascertained the fact as to how she looked in that befrilled protection of the heads of womankind; and Octavius said that, knowing the good dame had undertaken the care of his penknife when he went to the Nothe, after he "turned out" the table-drawer in her sitting-room by the right of "search," he ran into her bed-room to inquire after it, and when he got there (for he rushed in), he saw the old lady in her nightcap—and, "My! but she did look so funny!" He had hardly given this statement, when he perceived a storm gathering on the general's brow, and when the thunder burst, he was obliged to leave his egg untouched, and, truth to tell, had no longer an appetite for his breakfast, although different from and more abundant than that of the day before. All the general said was perfectly correct—he had no right to "turn out" nurse's drawer any more than if it had been the general's drawer, no right to enter her room at all without permission. The

reproof was like all the general's assaults, more severe than the cause warranted. But that was his way, and though he saw large tears dropping into the tea which Octavius had no longer power to swallow—each tear making a circle in the cream that stood on the top—he continued to reprove until Edward advanced to the rescue. Fixing his large eyes on his grandpapa, he said, in his low, sweet, earnest tones, that went into everybody's heart,—

“ Dear grandpapa, Octavius has never had any one before to teach him the sort of respect we owe servants. If *I* had acted so, I should have deserved great anger, because you taught me, long ago, that an Englishman's room is as much his castle as this house is your castle ; but, please, grandpapa, Octy did not know, and—and—— ”

“ And so I suppose you, young sir, think I have no right to be angry with him, eh, boy ? ”

“ Well, grandpapa, if you had known that Octy never had been taught what you have taught him now, I don't think you would have been so *very* hard upon him.”

“ Upon my word !—have you anything more to say, Mister Ned ? ”

“ Only, grandpapa, that Octavius told it all out

frankly. If he had known it was wrong, I do not think he would have done it, though he wanted the knife very much; but I am sure he would not have talked of it."

"Ned!"

"Yes, grandpapa."

"Come here."

The general took the lad's head between his great bony hands, and looked into his eyes.

"Who taught you logic?"

"I don't know what that is."

"Who taught you to think?"

"I believe," answered the boy, in a low, solemn tone, "it was God; for when I was so very, and so long, ill, I found thoughts come to me like company. I was never dull, and never felt alone, sir; and when I was tired reading, I can't tell how it was, but I thought about everybody, and then it seemed as if part of me went somewhere, and brought such happy things back to the other part. Forgive Octy, dear grandpapa, he was so kind to me, all from his own heart, for he has no one at all in the world to teach him to love, by loving him!"

"O yes, Octavius is forgiven. And now, my young philosopher, how did you know that people

were taught to love by being loved, eh, my Solon ? ”

“ Why, people loved me, and then I loved them.”

“ But, suppose no one loved you ? ”

“ Then I would love them, and they *must* love me ! ”

“ Good lad, you are worthy to be a soldier ! ”

“ Dear grandpapa, when I was very ill the clergyman used to come sometimes and sit with me, and he saw how sorry I was, because all my life I had longed to be a soldier like you.”

“ Did you, Edward ?—did you want to be like your grandpapa ? ”

“ Yes, brave and great as you have been ; and so he said to me, that though I should never be able to fight with the sword, I should still have the battle of life to fight ; and though I was a—a—cripple, I might still be a good Christian and a true gentleman.”

The general let the boy go and walked to the window, then took his hat, and went down the esplanade. He purchased two of the largest glass globes he could find in Weymouth, and ordered them home. Even in the commotion excited by their arrival, Octavius remembered to apologize to

nurse for his rudeness ; and once having the globes, even the more reasoning Edward would not wait to have them properly prepared, but crowded everything he could get into them : " Only this little one, Daddy—only this crab, you know I can take him out to-morrow ;—surely I may put in this wee flounder ? " and so on. They had, to be sure, half a day's schooling at the tidepool again, and Edward enjoyed the happiness of making a present to Santy. But it must be confessed that the " vivariums " kept the good nurse and Daddy in a state of discomfort for at least a week. Of course, the creatures could not exist in the over-crowded water any more than we could exist in an exhausted receiver, and there was a succession of deaths and disappointments, until Edward, very penitentially, assured Daddy Dacre that if he would direct, he (Edward) would obey, and put nothing in without his permission.

When the vivarium really flourished, Octavius ceased to think about it. But Ned knew what a source of instruction as well as pleasure it would be to others as well as to himself when he returned to school, and went on, quietly acquiring knowledge and gaining health at the same time.

Nurse, who was a close observer, saw with

much delight that the general talked less of the beauty of Octavius and more about Edward. The latter, fearing his grandpapa less and less every day, became more familiar and affectionate: he watched him with the eyes of love, and was always eager to render him some little service. No one but Edward dared insinuate that the general ever looked pale—no one but Edward dared discover that the wind was in the east, and withdraw his cane from his hand, or put away his hat; Edward prepared his egg at breakfast, and pushed it towards him with a smile that was quite irresistible. Edward had grown so much into his affection, that the old gentleman would have rejoiced if the doctor, who saw him every day, had said,—“My dear sir, your grandson must not go back to school.” Then Edward would read to him sometimes, and that was pleasant, for the general, though he never admitted he could not see as well as in days long past, complained bitterly that the type of modern books was abominable, and that publishers deserved to be punished who permitted books to be printed with such bad type, on such bad paper. The general also reasoned himself into a belief that, though it would have been a proud thing to have had such a boy as

Octavius, who would certainly grow into a proud, high-spirited man, and make a first-rate soldier, still he was rough and unrefined, and would have caused him much anxiety. If God spared him a few years longer, he felt that he should derive more real happiness from Edward, who would become a perfect gentleman, and make, if not "a figure" in the army, an excellent landlord. He was growing, too, and would be tall, and not so *very* lame, as he feared; then he was so like his mother! This pleasant state of mind would certainly be disturbed if Octavius galloped past on his pony, flourishing his whip, and glowing with exercise;—"But," he would mutter, "the fellow is very handsome, certainly, but he is not so gentlemanly, and has not half the brains of poor Edward."

"We want something to do, my dear Daddy," called out Edward to his old friend, whom he saw posting along the esplanade; he fancied "Daddy" was not pleased at his having neglected school for a few days.

"Sorry for you, Master Edward; but thought it was the case both with you and t' other young gentleman, when I saw him reduced to making ducks and drakes on the sea; he was so busy at that sort of do-nothing-ness, that the wave was

over his boots before he knew it. Younkers, gentle and simple, are sure to get into trouble when they have nothing to do ; and I can do nothing for you to-day, as I have some scholars waiting for me on Chesil ridge."

"Oh, Daddy, may I go too?"

"Why, I can't tell, Master Edward ; the lads there are rough lads, but want to hear all I can tell about what Santy calls 'Pobble ridge,' and a trifle of shipwreck. Perhaps the general would not like you to go with the other lads, Master Edward?"

"I will ask him."

The general consented ; but it was too far for Edward to walk : the boys must have their ponies.

Now Octavius and Edward thought they knew all about Chesil beach, or "Pobble beach," as Santy called it, because they had looked at it from Smallmouth sands. But they cantered after Daddy, and just saw him getting into the ferry-boat, so that he would cross the Nothe, and get on the sands under Sandesfoot Castle.

"A fellow on foot has such an advantage, you see," said Octavius. "Daddy will have a nice breezy run over the Nothe, and we must canter through the dirtiest part of the town and over



the bridge, and get on the sands after that fashion."

When on the sands, both lads laughed at the idea of Chesil beach being hard to climb—they declared any monkey could run it up; but when they came to ascend, and found the stones rolling from under the ponies' feet, they saw it was *not* light work, according to Octavius, for "man or beast." The boys dismounted, and surrendered their little steeds to the groom. Octavius bent himself to his toil, but for Edward the ascent was impossible. A strong sailor, however, came to help.

"Now, young master, put your arm round my neck. You're too heavy, do you say? Bless you! I wish you were as heavy again! You *are* light! There, master, there's the blessed sea, a rowling and a rowling, and yet, often as she has tried, she can't pass this mount of pebbles no more than she could beat in the Cornish rocks. There's a word and a will against her, stronger than her desire; the word I heard preached from once—'So far shalt thou go, and no farther!' Here we are, and that boat that's lost her *starn*, that's Master Dacre's school."

"Now, master, God bless you!"

Edward offered him some money; the sailor put

back the little white fingers with his rough, yet gentle, hand.

"Bless you, my sweet one, its just a pleasure to carry ye. I fancied I had an angel on my shoulder. God keep you in this world, though you look fitter for the next!"

"No one says that to *me*," said Octy, puffing and blowing after his exertion.

"You be a fine young gentleman, too," answered the sailor; "but *you* look quite fit for where you be."

Three or four country lads were lounging round Daddy's seat, and he made room for Edward by his side. It was difficult, however, to fix the attention of the lads, for the beach presented a very animated appearance, as a boat belonging to the islanders of Portland, and another, the property of the villagers of Wyke, were landing their fishy cargoes, consisting chiefly of mackerel, whose scales shone like jewels in the sun, and there was a good-humoured rivalry between the islanders and the men of Wyke as to whose "take" was the best; the hawkers, who were watching to buy, and the fishermen, anxious to sell, were full of their business; the country lads were used to it, and soon looked only at Daddy; but Octavius, however,

forgot Daddy's school, and dashed off to the boats, while Daddy endeavoured to explain the great value of this pebble mountain to the country. "They knew," he said, "that it extended from the island of Portland to Abbotsbury, where it joined the land, and from thence a long way onward, forming, in the whole, a length of upwards of nine miles; but perhaps I did not know that, were these pebbles to be taken away, the whole country for miles and miles around would become part of the ocean."

"I have been here in the worst storms, and the raging of the sea at this time during storms is more than terrible. A great wave, whose height seems far above the ridge, comes down the sides as black as thunder and its crest like lightning, comes steadily on. 'Surely,' I have thought, *that* will pounce down and wash away the whole. But no! it flings from its caverns thousands of pebbles, and then sweeping away as many from the lower part, floods back, leaving the next to return what it has taken. Great and mighty rocks form wonderful barriers to our

"Sea-girt isle,"

and great kings and chiefs, particularly in the old times, built great sea walls, with towers and castles,

to keep back the waves where there were no rocks to stand against them ; and I've seen those old walls gnawed, eaten, and torn by the waters, as if great guns had been fired at them. And yet there, before our eyes, where now the fisher folk are casting the creatures of the deep into the huxters' carts, who will sell and distribute the fish to feed the people—*there*, my dear lads, is a barrier formed of loose pebbles, not cemented together, but loose, so that a child could hurl scores of them into the sea—some of spar, some of quartz, jasper, and other rare stones (that you, Jimmy Gort, who never stood still one minute in all your life, are kicking holes in your boots with, as if your poor mother did not find them wear out fast enough)—so rare and beautiful are many of these pebbles, that the gentry buy them and have them polished. And yet those loose pebbles resist the most furious tempest as well as, ay, better than, rocks or sea-walls, for they are not worn and defaced. Ah, lads, wherever you may travel when old Daddy is in his grave, you will never see anything more wonderful than the pebble ridge from Portland to Abbotsbury.

“Long ago, when I was a boy, there was a great deal of smuggling went on along this coast—a

great deal, and the smugglers used to run their cargoes in packs on to the pebble ridge. The darkest nights they could do this in perfect safety, because they knew the safe spots. Now, how do you suppose they knew them? Not by any rocks, for there are none; not by stake-marks, they would have told the revenue officers where they were likely to be; not by lights, they would have pointed them still more clearly out to their watches. Can you guess it?—nor you?—nor you? Can you, Master Edward? No? Well, then, Daddy must tell you. Those who know the Chesil beach, know—and this is as wonderful and unaccountable as many things, my lads, which we meet every day without looking at or considering; for if we did consider, we should be lost in wonder at the wisdom and providence of the great Creator, and feel how little we know of what surrounds us. I do wish, Jimmy Gort, that you would stand still. What are you dabbling at?”

“It was a horse-stinger, sir, that has been trying to fasten on my nose.”

“No, sir,” said a less restless boy; “it is only a daddy long shanks. There it goes, sir, with twenty others; they cut such capers in the sun.”

“Now, Jimmy, do you know what I have been

saying? for if you do not, you had better go home."

"Yes, Daddy, indeed I do; it was about the greatness of God, and how little we know of anything."

"Please, sir, I don't think Jimmy can help fidgeting; his family are called the fidgety Gorts. It's in the family."

This half excuse, half taunt transformed Jimmy into a statue; he knitted his fingers firmly together, and planted his feet side by side, with a determination that they should grow there, rather than move.

"Well, lads, those who have observed Chesil beach know that the nearer the pebbles are to the sea the larger they are, and that they gradually diminish in size the nearer they approach the mainland, being for the most part very little larger than horse-beans towards Abbotsbury; though here, they are, as you see, from one to three inches in diameter. Well, all sailors know this; but the smugglers in old times knew it so practically that, during the darkest nights, they used to crawl on shore through the surf, and could tell within a yard the exact part of the shore they were on, by feeling the size of the pebbles. This, of course, enabled

them to ascertain to a nicety where they wanted to run their cargo ashore. One old fellow in particular used just to go bobbing along, laying his hand down here and there, until he ascertained the exact spot, and then he would give a plash in the water, like the leap of a fish ; just enough—and the smuggled kegs were ashore, and the confederates down in no time.”

“Is it wicked to smuggle, Daddy ?”

“It certainly is. It is wicked to disobey the laws which yield us protection. We have no right to the protection of Government unless we obey the Government. But there are no smugglers now. Smuggling was bad, but wrecking was worse. I remember, in my childhood, an old woman who used to live nigh to where the coast-guard station now is as you go to Preston. She was, I heard, the widow of the last Dorsetshire wrecker—a poor, brokenhearted, crushed woman. I remember she always stole into the church on Sunday evenings as if she had no right to be there, and sometimes she would moan as if her heart was breaking. Many times I’ve seen her sitting on her husband’s grave at night, wringing her hands, and speaking to the dumb clay, as if it were living. Ah, lads ! we .

should all pray against temptation, and I do think the desire to 'make haste to be rich' is the greatest temptation that can come upon a man."

But, Daddy, what was a wrecker?" inquired Edward.

"A man, dear, who managed to hang out lights in the night-time over the most dangerous parts of the coast, so that the poor mariners thought they were steering for harbour, when, in fact, they were driving on the rocks; and then, when the ship was dashed to pieces, those wicked men would rush down to the beach, and seize on the property driven on shore, and rob and murder the poor sailors who were struggling with the waves for their lives."

"There, that will do!" exclaimed Edward; "only you never *saw* this done."

"Thank God, never!"

"Then I don't believe it—that's all!" said poor Ned, who, whenever anything he did not like to believe was told him, comforted himself by deciding not to believe it. "I do not believe one word of it, Daddy; it is too cruel to think of; it is almost wicked to believe that our fellow-creatures



could so have forgotten their duty to their neighbours."

"But they warn't their neighbours. It was *bad* enough, no doubt; but they warn't their neighbours, sir," said Timms.


"Why, they did not live in the same village, or perhaps in the next," replied Edward; "but is not the good Samaritan in the Bible called the 'neighbour' of the man who fell among thieves? Each man is neighbour to the other; we can no more get rid of that human claim, than we can of our lives. We are all neighbours one to the other."

"Did you ever see a wrecker?" inquired one of the boys.

"No, as I thought I said, only a wrecker's widow;—poor lonely woman, who seemed bent down by curses. Ah! there's no load so heavy as the ill wishes of those we have injured."

"But, daddy, we should not give ill wishes to those who injure us."

"No; those who know what is right, do not; but even if they are not given, if they are *deserved*, they weigh the spirit that ought to rise to the heavens down to the grave, long, long before its time."



"You said you would tell us of the shipwreck that was years ago, Mr. Daddy," exclaimed one of the young voices.

"And so I will; but eh, lads, there have been many shipwrecks in my time. I've seen them in many parts of the world."

## CHAPTER XI.

"ONCE in my life," commenced Daddy, "I rejoiced at a shipwreck;—not the shipwreck that occurred here, my lads, but a shipwreck on the cruel rocks of a distant country. By God's mercy a slaver—that is, a ship which conveys negroes from their own land, that they may be sold in another—was driven ashore; and before I tell you of the shipwreck here, I will tell you of *that*. In the part of the country where I was, every man, black and white, was alike *free*. I do not tell you that even *there* the white looked upon the black as his brother: he would not eat with him, or shake hands with him; but he would not buy him or sell him.

"The country is a fine country, and the people are a fine people; but there are points," said Daddy, looking very dignified, "we don't 'gree about. However, I do not name the country, because I don't want to prejudice young minds against a whole people; give them good Christian

principles ; make the BIBLE the foundation of all education ; and then they will know how to treat their fellow-creatures, and also which country to love best in the world.

“ How the ship got so out of her bearings as to run ashore on a free state, when she was bound for a slave state, I forget.

“ There had been severe storms ; and we had already seen two noble vessels go to pieces, within three days of each other, and not one living man washed ashore. This was the third. She drifted like a log on the water,—a beautiful thing she must have been—swift and strong. It was wonderful how so beautiful a ship could have been battered into so helpless a mass, at the mercy of the pitiless breakers, that cast her, minute by minute, nearer and nearer to her final destruction. We could see, as we thought, every man on board ; and they were far too few for the work that should be done ; but all the men in England could not save her *then*. The waves were water-mountains, backed by a fierce wind. One of these heaved her up as lightly as a boy casts up a shuttlecock ; and there for a moment she rested, high and dry, spitted, as it were, on a fearsome rock ; the next, she was torn and hurried by the returning waters

foaming and roaring over her in fierce exultation ; when they retreated she was staggering and reeling, and her side next the land was, as it were, split open. The thunder, I should have told you, was outroaring the sea ; and the flashes of lightning at times made it seem brighter than day ;—flash after flash passed across the gash in the ship's side ; and out of it we saw what seemed to us hundreds of blacks, crawling as bees swarm out of a hive in the hour of danger. The crew were struggling in the breakers, and scores of ropes and floats had been thrown to them. Some were clinging to the rocks, others being rescued by the brave fellows who risked their lives to save the strangers ; but when we caught sight of the blacks, our sympathy took another turn. The poor creatures had evidently been shut down in the hold, without a chance of life ; no thought given to them,—many of them fettered ; and if it had not been for the staving in of the ship's side, they would all have been drowned, without the least chance of escape. Many seemed paralyzed, either from former ill-treatment, or from terror, and dropped into the water without an effort ; others fought for their lives, and conquered. It was wonderful how some whose ancles were manacled still managed to gain

the shore. It is impossible to say *how*, but the waves rolled them in as thick as blackberries. I told you that even in that part of the world the white man, though he would not buy or sell a negro, would not eat with him, or take his hand; but that night, scores of whites breasted the breakers to save the children of Africa. My anxiety to rescue those who were struggling in that fearful sea was so great that I lost sight of the ship—I never thought of her. My memory brings her to me, *spitted* on the rock, as if she had been hurled there by a giant's arm,—a mighty thing, hanging between the sky and the ocean, with the black creatures creeping out of her. One end of a stout rope was braced round my body; the other end was held by my friends on shore; and so I fought the breakers, to save the lives of those poor strangers."

"And did you save any, dear Daddy?" inquired Edward, almost breathlessly.

"It pleased God," he answered, "that I rescued five that night: one white, three blacks, and a young girl who was neither black nor white, a Mulatto girl. I caught her, and lost her, for my strength was almost gone; I got sight of her again, and remember the spring I made to catch her long

black hair, which I saw floating on the light of a wave—phosphoric light, they call it,—and I never see that light now on a breaker without thinking of that object. I *did* catch it, and drew her to me; and when they hauled me on the shore (a little sand bay, just under a point of the reef where the poor ship was spiked), I was, to all appearance, a dead man, with one arm folded tight round the girl!”

“But she lived, Daddy, surely?—did she not live? Oh, you dear, brave Daddy, no wonder I always loved you so much!” said Edward.

“She did, thank God!” answered the old man.

“She did, indeed, and for twenty years was to me as loving and as faithful a wife as ever man had.”

“Mamma’s maid, Myra!” exclaimed Edward. “I knew mamma’s maid was your wife; and she was so kind to me, she had such beautiful eyes, and used to make such delicious sweetmeats, and let down her long hair for me to play with,—but it was not black, Daddy.”

“No, Master Edward, it was grey, almost white, when you knew her; it changed too soon for her years. But when I recovered from that swoon, the day was breaking; there were faint streaks of pink and saffron colour on the clouds, and I looked for

the ship. She was gone ; gone off the rock, just as a dream passes ! Oh, it was awful ! the sea and strand (the tide was flowing out), covered with spars, and bolts, ay, and fetters. And one gigantic negro, who had learned that he was in a free state, and that he was no longer a slave to the pale-faced, miserable-looking man who crouched against a rock, and to whom one of our kind-hearted fellows was administering a cordial, had found and seized upon a whip once used to bring him into subjection. He was marching backwards and forwards, heedless of his drenched garments, shaking the whip in fierce exultation, and more than half insane at the idea of liberty—and liberty among whites ! Our sailor fellows mightily enjoyed knocking the fetters to bits, and delighted in repeating to the shipwrecked whites that their cargo were as free as themselves. The next morning, however, convinced us what a sacrifice of life there had been : not more than eight whites and about thirty blacks were saved. But, still I rejoiced in the wreck : I thought it was better for those poor negroes to pass into the spirit-world than to remain enslaved in this. I never could bear the idea of slavery, and I think a slaveholder degrades himself and his nation, and by his own act. The two following



days we spent in digging graves; but it was singular—the excitement once over—how the people of the country returned to their old prejudices. The inhabitants buried the whites with care, but they left us to perform the same office for the poor negroes, objecting to their being laid in consecrated ground. *We* Jacks (I was a Jack-tar then) did not like to make a fuss about it, as we believed the dead sanctified the earth,—so we took a little plot of ground, read **THE WORD**, and prayed there, then put them reverently—six in a grave—and read the burial service, leaving them, in the belief that the Almighty would have mercy on them, and we should have added, pardon their betrayers. But as the landsmen had undertaken to bury the latter, we left them to *their* prayers.”

“And your wife that was to be, Master Dacre?”

“Well, I married her in little more than a month! She was too young to be left alone in the world, and I was tired of a sea-faring life—though I shall love the sea as long as I breathe. I used to have great time for thought during the night-watches, and liked so much, when a boy, to be sent up aloft, that I have got into many a scrape in the hope of being mastheaded. Oh, it is grand to sit rocking beside the noble mast, while the deep sends up its

thoughts in mighty murmurs; it is very, very grand—and to see the stars so bright in the blue sky! My poor wife was so childlike in her sayings: she used to call the moon God's great candle, and the stars his little candles!" The old man paused, as if to look back, and then added,—  
"Altogether, it was a wonderful shipwreck!"

"Now, tell us another," exclaimed one; "we all like to hear about shipwrecks; it is the nicest 'school' of all, when you tell about shipwrecks!"

"We like sailors; they are such good-hearted chaps," said another; "so frank, and don't care how they throw away their money."

"You must not put that down as a good quality, my boy. I love the sea, and I love sailors; but throwing away money, as they often do, proceeds simply from their not understanding its use. Extravagance is, in its way, as grave a fault as stinginess, and one leads to as much sorrow as the other. I knew a sailor once who gave a five-pound note to a boy who was crying because he had broken a pitcher, and feared his mother would beat him. The *mob* called it 'generosity;' I called it 'waste,' and in his case, 'wickedness.' To gratify an impulse, he threw away what would have kept his own poor mother out of the workhouse for three or four

months; and when he wanted to rejoin his ship, he was obliged to beg of a brother, who supported his family, with the help of a good wife, on earnings that never amounted to a pound a week. Generosity and thrift are both good subjects; but our very noblest impulses, unless they are controlled and sifted by reason, make bad masters."

"I saw," said Edward, "in a small edition of some beautiful poems, by the American poet Longfellow, these four lines about money:—

'Whereunto is money good?  
Who has it not, wants hardihood;  
Who has it, has much trouble and care;  
Who once has had it, has despair.'

But I have heard you say, dear Daddy, 'Never despair.'"

"True, master Edward. Some say, 'While there is life there is hope,' and I always add, the GREAT HOPE is when this life is passed away. I would rather the last line was—

'The man who *wastes* it, has despair.'

But that's not right, either. He should make up his mind to waste no more; and if he had nothing, he should place himself repentingly in God's hands, and hope to be forgiven; for we are but stewards

of the good things given unto us, to use them thriftily for others."

"Listen to another passage—such a funny one," persisted Edward.

"'Joy, and temperance, and repose,  
Slam the door on the doctor's nose.'"

The village boys enjoyed that mightily. They all liked the idea of "slamming the door" on the poor doctor's nose.

"Ah! you're brave lads when you are well," exclaimed Daddy; "but when you are sick, then you cry for the doctor; *then* it is *dear* doctor, and good doctor, and sweet doctor. But there is no doubt on't but 'joy, temperance, and repose,' are famous doctors. I like the lines well, Master Ned; only the slam on the nose to the doctor when he is not wanted smacks of ingratitude.—And now for the shipwreck!"

While this rambling conversation was going on, the boats had discharged their cargoes, the fish had changed owners, the nets were spread out on the heated stones of Pebble Ridge to dry, and several of the boats were hauled up to wait the evening tide; the fishermen were gone home, poor fellows! to rest, and the place, which

had been as bustling and busy as a country town on market-day, was quite deserted; one or two boats were leisurely straggling back to Portland, the oars dipping lazily in the water.

Suddenly Edward exclaimed, "Daddy, where's Octavius? I do not see him anywhere. Oh! where is he?"

"I saw the young *gent* get into Barnabas Blakely's boat—there—that far-off one. I dare say he's away for a row round Portland."

Edward started up. "Oh, call him back, Daddy! call them back! All of you call them back! What will grandpapa say? But perhaps they can be round the island in an hour, and he will be home to dinner."

Master Dacre looked uneasy, and mounting the Ridge, hailed the boat, and hoisted his handkerchief on the top of his stick, as a signal; and of course all the boys shouted when he "a-hoyed," and, of course, rejoiced in the noise, and jumped and shouted, and threw up their caps and hats again and again; and they saw Octavius stand up and wave his cap in a very dignified way, as if returning a salute. But the boat kept steadily on its course, without tacking, and Edward eagerly inquired when it would return?

"Can any of you lads tell if Barnabas Blakely was sober?" asked Master Dacre.

"Pretty much as usual," replied one of the party. "I was not looking at him, for he thinks nothing of pelting us with stones if we look at him, or call him 'Old Hazy.' He certainly won't be back till this time to-morrow; he lives at t'other side of Portland, and will start to fish from there to-night."

Poor Edward was in an agony: he knew how angry the general would be at such behaviour. He trembled at the idea of the approaching storm, as a green middy would do at his first "nor-wester." It was bad enough to go to sea at all; but to go without the general's permission, and with a drunken sailor, "old Hazy," who might upset the boat, and drown Octavius,—and to know that he had left him, his friend, without a good-bye or a word of any kind,—all this agitated Ned, so that he could hardly restrain his tears.

"If the young gentleman has any *tin* in his pocket," suggested the eldest of the boys, "Barnaby will hook it out, and keep him amused, until—until the young gentleman forgets it."

"Suppose," said Edward, "that you and I, dear

Daddy, take a carriage, and drive into Portland to where this Barnaby lives."

"We must not do that, Master Edward, without your dear grandpapa's permission; and I fear it would be useless; for when Barnaby is on shore he passes his time more frequently in the public-house than with his wife and children. It was very wrong, very wrong indeed, going with any of the fishermen without leave; but, poor young gentleman! he has taken the worst of the whole lot!"

"He will not hurt him—surely he will not hurt him," repeated Edward.

"He will not do him any bodily harm, I dare say; but he is a bad fellow. Oh, if the young could only be made to believe in the old!—to ask their counsel, and abide by it—what a deal of suffering they would save themselves and others."

"And that's quite true, I am sure," said Edward. "He was always longing to go round Portland in a boat, and grandpapa said he should not go, unless in the steamer, with nurse and Daddy, and Octavius told me he would rather not go at all, if he was to be under the care of an old woman."

"And an old man," suggested Daddy Dacre.

"Well, and even if he did say so, *that* is no great harm, for you *are* old, dear Daddy, though I love



you all the better for it ;—you are old, and, please God, will be older ! But, oh, Octy, Octy ! how could you do so ? How shall I meet grandpapa ? What will he say to me ? How can I look at him ? What *shall* I do ?—that wicked fisherman may hurt him."

"No," said Daddy, "I do not think he would venture to do that. I wish, with all my heart, he had not gone ; I never thought it necessary to watch him, foolish boy ! But we have no time to lose, Master Edward. One of these boys must fetch the pony, it is off in yon stable, and we must go at once to the Esplanade, and tell his honour the general ; he will know what is best to be done !"

"And we are to have no more shipwrecks this time ?" said the youngest boy of the party. "We are all made to suffer because the young gentleman ran away to sea, though only for a lark !"

"But it is a lark without a song," said another. "That's the meaning of the innocent suffering for the guilty."

"Very true," exclaimed Daddy, who never lost an opportunity of giving good advice. "Whenever any of you boys are tempted to do what is wrong, even if you make up your minds to bear the blame bravely, just, my lads, think of the sorrow—if not



the shame—it may bring to those you love, or those who love you. We are so strung together, so united by the laws of affection and interest—by the laws of God and man,—that no human being, be he ever so little, or so poor, or so mean, so big, or so rich, or so liberal, but is accountable to his fellow-creatures, as well as to his Maker, for his actions. And that reminds me of Jacky Bundle and his wheaten straw, only I have not time to tell it you now. We'll have a school, Master Edward, dear, when Master Octavius comes back, among the reeds and the breezes at the swanery. Here is the pony, and we must at once to the general, to know what is best to be done ! ”

## CHAPTER XII.

AND what did the general say it would be "right to do?"

I am sorry to tell it, but the fact is, that when Edward arrived at his grandpapa's house, "grandpapa" was *not* in a good humour.

The general knew the value of time, and the general knew that little boys should never keep their elders waiting for anything, particularly for their dinners.

The general's dinner had waited three minutes and eighteen seconds. He was seated in his arm-chair in the library, his eyes were fixed on the time-piece, and he was holding his watch in his hand, when poor Edward, forgetting all about the dinner-hour, and grandpapa's punctuality, rushed into the room unwashed, unbrushed, looking heated and dusty, and absolutely forgetting to leave his cap in the hall.

He sprang forward to seize his grandpapa's hand, and, most unfortunately, stumbled over his

grandpapa's foot—a tender foot, suffering from corns, and only covered by some patent boot, which is warranted to “avoid pressure.”

“Mind where you are going, young sir, and look at the clock,” said the general. “Serve you right if I ordered you to your room, and gave you no dinner.”

“I am very sorry, grandpapa,” murmured poor Edward, struggling to overcome his emotion; “but Daddy Dacre says you only can tell what it would be right to do—and please say it at once, for we do not know, and we may never, never, see him again!”

“See who again? What is the matter, and what do you want? There, keep back! it is unpleasant to be near any living thing in the state you are in at this moment; go and make yourself presentable. I am shocked that a relative of mine should so forget what is due to me and to himself.”

“But, grandpapa, every moment is precious; if you could only send a file of soldiers after him—or a boat—or a footman—anything to save him. The fisherman who has taken him to sea is a bad man. I was listening to Daddy Dacre, and Octy——”

“Your friend's name is Octavius—abbreviations are vulgar!”

"I was listening to what Daddy Dacre said in his school, and Octavius went down to see the boats land their fish. I was so full of the shipwreck Daddy told of, that I never looked towards the boats, or, indeed, thought of anything except the shipwreck ; and just as Daddy finished, we discovered that Octy—I mean Octavius, grandpapa—had gone off in Barnabas Blakely's boat. We called, and shouted, and made signals, but the boat kept on its course, and Octavius has gone to sea with a very bad fisherman, whose home is at the other side of Portland Island, somewhere near Pennsylvania Castle, though he is seldom at home, but in the different public-houses. Oh, dear grandpapa, send some one to the island to find Octavius. I know he is very much to blame—he has left without your permission ; but in holiday time, having no living parents, he has been accustomed to do just as he liked. He did not intend to be rude to you, dear grandpapa."

The general remained silent.

"Dear grandpapa, Octavius is alone in the world. Oh, dear grandpapa, do not look so angry—if you would tell Daddy what ought to be done——"

The general rang the bell. "Let dinner be served."

"And, dear grandpapa——"

"You have behaved very rudely, Edward,—have kept dinner—my dinner—waiting full twenty minutes, without an apology, even. Go to your room, and come down looking like what you do not look now—a young gentleman."

The general could hear Edward's sobs as he crossed the hall, and while the dinner was placing on the table, the nurse entered with her usual curtsey.

"I beg your pardon, honoured general, but I cannot be answerable for Master Edward's health if he has such violent fits of crying. To see him, now, trembling like the leaf of an aspen on a windy day, just breaks my heart. His little frame is like waxwork, and he is so gentle. Indeed, your honour, noble general, was wrong to be so angry with him."

"Angry!" repeated her master, not a little relieved by remembering that he might scold "nurse."  
"Angry, woman! I was *not* angry with him. He kept me waiting dinner, entered my room like a wild Indian, never apologized, but commenced a rhodomontade about Octavius, who, in the rudest possible manner, has gone, without permission, to cruise round Portland, with a good-for-nothing fisherman; and this puny, piping boy wants me to

send a file of soldiers, or a footman, after his quondam friend, who deserves to be brought home by a horsewhip. I cannot think how I could be such a fool as to invite a pair of schoolboys to torture me, yet I bear it all! Did *not* send Master Edward to his room on the instant, as I ought to have done, and ordered him bread and water, but desired him to make haste to dinner—he wails all the way up-stairs—you know I cannot bear a woman or a child to cry; as I live, you are wiping your eyes now! I dare say that old sea-dog will rob the boy! I hope he will, and set him ashore stripped and penniless at Bow-and-Arrow Castle, to find his way home as best he can—an Orson of a boy!”

“You often wished, honoured sir, that Master Edward was like him; sure, it’s thanking God you ought to be, sir, for having an angel in the house, for that’s what Master Edward is—an angel!—and not getting angry—saving your honour’s presence—at you hardly know what. And sure, if yourself had a dear friend in peril, by land or by *sae*, its not thinking about dinners, and ceremonies, and *substantives*\* you’d be, but how to get ye’r friend

\* Substantials.

out of trouble. Master Edward's a chip of the old block, and thankful I am for it. Maybe you'd let me take him the bit of dinner your honour is going to cut for him!"

Nurse walked after her master to the dining-room door, and waited outside until the footman brought out a trayful of good things for her favourite, and a message that the general hoped Master Edward would come down to dessert.

During dinner he gave directions concerning Octavius, simply from a desire to tranquillize Edward; for he judged rightly, that a good roughing would be the proper recompense for the thoughtless conduct of a rash, careless boy.

Edward came down, with polished face and shining hair, but his eyes were red, and his voice tremulous. After a little time had passed, he apologized to his grandpapa for having kept him waiting. The general liked to test his truth, it was always so bright.

"I suppose you never thought of my dinner, Ned?"

"No, grandpapa, never after the boat seemed to refuse to tack; indeed, I do not think I thought of it at all. I thought at once how angry you would be, but I never thought about dinner; it

was very wrong of me, I know, but I did not think of your dinner—not even when I heard the clock strike three.”

“Well,” said the general, “I cannot bear being kept waiting; and I need not tell you that youth should show its respect to age by strict attention to its habits, no less than to its commands; but the pleasure your speaking the truth gives me is so great that I forgive your spoiling my dinner.”

Edward clasped his arms round his grandpapa's neck, and kissed him fondly.

“I *do* love you,” he murmured. “I love you very dearly; only sometimes when I am loving you so much, you look sternly at me, or say something in a hard voice, and then all my love seems frightened, and runs cold. I saw a little boy yesterday leading a blind old man—very much older than you, grandpapa; he was feeble, as well as blind, and leaned sometimes so heavily upon the little boy's shoulder that it seemed hard work to keep steady; but he *did* keep steady; and the old man wanted to sit down, and the boy chose him such a nice turfy bit, by the roadside, to sit on; and he had a little loaf, and divided it, giving the old man much the largest share; and then they had such a pretty loving dispute about the quantity. At last I spoke to them,



and the old man said the boy was his eyes, and his strength, and his heart; it was *so* pretty! I did so wish that *you*, dear grandpapa, were poor and blind, that I might prove my love to you as the boy did to that good old man. Daddy knows them, and says they are so good. Oh, if you were but blind!"

"Really, Edward, I would much rather be as I am. I have no desire to become either poor or blind, simply to prove your love. I am quite satisfied to believe in it."

"As you are, I can do nothing for you, grandpapa."

"Oh, yes, my boy, you can remember my dinner-hour."

Soon after, Edward walked to the window, and stood with his face pressed against the glass.

"Are you watching the light springing into the gas-lamps, as if by magic?" inquired the general.

"No, grandpapa."

"Then you are watching the moon rising, as she appears to do, over Lulworth; or enjoying the beams that make a pathway on the sea from the Breakwater lighthouse."

"No, grandpapa; I was watching for Octavius. May I sit up until he comes home?"

"Certainly not. I do not think he will be found to-night. Unless he is very sea-sick (which I hope he may be), he will go out with the fishers ; so pray for a soft wind, in your own gentle words, and go at once to bed."

"To bed, dear grandpapa ?"

"Yes, certainly. Why should you not ?"

"I could not sleep."

"You must try ; keeping awake will not bring him the sooner."

Edward went to bed, after he had prayed, he thought, more fervently than ever he had done before, that God would protect Octavius, and bring him quickly home. It was very tantalizing to see Portland in the silver moonlight, and the bay of Weymouth so smooth and clear, and hear the gentle ripple and dash of the waters ; and the little fellow could hardly restrain his tears when he remembered that if he had been stout and strong, like other boys, he might have gone himself to seek his friend. He obeyed his grandpapa, by going to bed ; but at every footstep that passed along the pavement he sprang out, and looked and listened, in the hope of seeing Octavius, and then crept listlessly to bed again. There was an extraordinary difference in the rapidity of the going and returning step. He

heard the church-clock strike eleven. It was not the first time poor Edward had counted the hours ; but the tide was in, and the deep-toned bell of the clock was mingled with the sound of the waves. Edward thought it very solemn—and so it was. Footsteps almost ceased to pass, but Edward watched for them all the same, and sprang out with even more rapidity. Once he was sorely disappointed, for the footsteps paused at the general's door, and he thought it must be Octavius, but it was only the policeman ; and as he turned from the window, there, candle in hand, stood the the faithful Irish nurse, Mistress Peggy.

“How you have been getting in and out of that blessed bed, my darlint, and not a dressing-gown on, or a morsel of shoes on your dawshy white feet ! Go to bed, my jewel, and, sure if it's any comfort to you, my cushla, it's your own Peggy that will sit by ye'r bedside, and look out for the footsteps ; and if that wearisome Master Octavius comes, I'll wake ye up, my pet—ay, if you were as sound as every one of the seven sleepers *rowled* into one !”

“Thank you, nurse ; but I am sorry I disturbed you—very sorry. How good of you to come and bring that cheerful light ; and, if you are not sleepy,

it will be so nice to have you here! Do you think Octavius will be home to-night?"

"More than I can tell, my darlint. It's bad enough, and heartsore enough, when a wild young colt breaks away from the halter, which is as necessary for his own safety as for the safety of others; but when a vicious old horse gets rid of bit and rein it's ten time worse. That Barabbas——"

"Barnabas, nurse."

"Well, darlint, sure it's all one! Barabbas was a robber, and, from all I hear, that fisherman's no better; so, *if* his name isn't Barabbas it *ought* to be, that's all. That fellow may lead the poor, foolish young gentleman on, thinking to get money out of him—for Master Octavius is fond of making a splash, purtending he has more than he has, which is not a nice habit. There's many I know that thinks it's innocent, and would call it only 'a bit of a stretch;' but I can't make a shuttlecock out of a block of marble, Master Edward, and what's not true is untrue—a lie is a lie, and no more about it."

"He means no harm, Mistress Peggy!"

"Sure, I know that; but I never could see any divarshin in that sort of brag. Poverty is no sin; but if make-believe grandeur is not a sin, it is very

near it. I have often taken the liberty of checking Master Octavius for talking so big. I understand he spoke very large of being able to pay for a boat, and being his own master; and then Barabbas tempted him, as he said, to show him some sea life and gulls' eggs, and bring him all round Portland, besides landing him at Bow-and-Arrow Castle, and showing him the towns, and lighthouses, and the breakwater, and quarries, and prisons, in two hours!"

"Who told you, dear nurse?"

"A sailor, of whom Daddy asked some questions, and he came here afterwards."

"You think he is quite safe?"


"Yes, dear; everybody who was at Pebble Beach saw him get into the boat.—Bless you, my child! do you know the top of your nose is quite black; you have been rubbing it against the glass! I wish your eyes were not so bright, you do not look in the least sleepy."

"There, nurse, I hear a footstep."

"The policeman again, dear, and a great cat; I see its eyes glitter—it has just run down the steps."

"Oh, bother!"

"If you say 'bother!' Master Edward, they will all call you Paddy. Oh, dear, that puts me in



mind of a story I heard once: it was about a boy who believed in fairies—'good people' they call them in my part of the world."

"But you do not believe in them, nurse, do you?"

"My belief, darlint, has nothing to do with my story. The little boy's name was Ben—little Ben Troyle. He was a very 'cute little chap, and it was by no means asy to make a fool of Ben. He lived with his grandmother, who was a wee, wee woman, in a wee, wee cabin—what you would call a cottage—and he was wee, wee, himself. Well, Ben had a great belief in fairies; and well he might have, for he had a fairy godmother."

"What nonsense, nurse!"

"I must tell my story my own way. He had a fairy godmother. Well, darlint, if Ben was wee, and his grandmother wee, and their cabin wee, the fairy godmother was wee-er than any of them. Ben's hand could go through the eye of a darning-needle, but the fairy godmother could go through the eye of a cambric-needle, body and bones—that is, supposing she had a body and bones, which I can't answer for, because she might be a spectre; but, anyhow, it was the good godmother she was to Ben, for she took care that wee, wee Ben, and his

wee, wee grandmother, had everything in the wee, wee cabin to match ; and you never, in all your life, saw such a wee, wee potato-pot, or such a wee, wee kish (that is a basket, dear, for straining the potatoes), and such a dawsky tay-service, *raal* chaney from China—in truth, the whole concern was all as one as a babby-house. She also got them such wee cocks and hens, that the gentry would give any money for the eggs. You may judge how very small Ben Troyle and his grandmother were, when I tell you that every Sunday, after mass, the priest put on his spectacles to see if they were in chapel. The fame of the wee, wee people spread far and wide. No quality—that is, gentlemen and ladies—ever went to Ballygomiles without calling to see them ; and there was no end to the money they made, for every one who took an egg, or a fairy rose, or had a look at the wee, wee pigs, or the wee cat, or the dog that *bate* the world for smallness, made Ben a present.

“ At first—and, indeed, for a long time—Ben was as proud as a *paycock* of his fairy godmother's gifts : he rode his little pony, with his grandmother on the pillion behind him, to the chapel, and to the fairs, and patrons, and everything ; and every one delighted in him, he was such a gay little fellow.

"He was riding quiet and asy home from one of the fairs, having had double his usual price for the eggs of the wee, wee hens, and much more than they were worth, for a litter of wee, wee pigs, when a great half-fool of a fellow—a man with no more brains than a snipe—made a rush across the road from where he had been standing among a number of his neighbours, and fair and asy lifted up Ben Troyle and the pony, just as they were, a-top of a rick of hay that had been cut more than half-way down for the cattle, as you see it in farmers' yards.

"'Stay there till morning, now, my little fellow, and small thanks to you, for you can't get down. A pretty figure you cut; you'd look well on my lord's chimney-piece, or in a shop window. A pretty little dolly you are, to have the pick of the country visiting your cabin, and giving you three times the worth for whatever you have to sell. Oh, you're a grand man, ain't you!—such a hop-o'-my-thumb to call itself man! *I'd* rather be dead than like you, mite of a man! I could eat you up at a bit, I could!'

"I am sorry to say that some of his neighbours, who were jealous of poor Ben's good fortune, joined in the laugh raised by a foolish, ignorant



man, and jeered wee, wee Ben and his wee, wee pony. At last he drew himself up, and, giving the little animal her head, he used his spurs with good effect; the pony sprang down, and dashed off with her master in first-rate style, and he soon reached home."

The nurse paused: she had told the story in a low, soft, soothing voice, and hoped that Edward would have been asleep before its conclusion; but no—he at last said,—

"Please to go on, Mistress Peggy."

"Well, dear, his wee, wee grandmother was glad to see him; and his cockle-shell slippers and his cobweb jacket were all ready, and his tea in the chaney that came from China; but Ben Troyle's peace was gone: the foolish words of a foolish man had gone from his ears to his heart; he kicked his slippers over the wee, wee cat; he tossed his cobweb jacket into a corner; he would not return the caress of the wee, wee dog; nor touch a drop of his wee, wee grandmother's tea!

"'What ails you, Ben, acoushla?' says the ould lady, who loved him with all her heart,—'what ails ye, Ben, dear?'

"'I want to be big, like other men, grandmother; and I want you to be big.'

"'Darlint, I was done growing fifty years ago.

We came; by my mother's side, of the family of the Wees, and, by my father's, of the family of the Littles; so we can't but be small; but you know the rhyme:—

‘ Though we are little,  
We're made of good metal.’ ”

“ ‘ I want to be big, grandmother,—I want to be a giant,—I want to do great things.’ ”

“ Now, the wee, wee grandmother was a knowledgeable woman; and she says, ‘ Little people have as big spirits as large people; and if little people have the wit, they'll find the way to do fine things. A mouse once let a lion out of a net, and a shepherd's boy killed a giant. There's no knowing what *you* may do yet, Ben Troyle, though you'll never grow an inch, that's certain.’ ”

“ Ben gave no reply. The scoffs and the jeers of a parcel of silly people made a greater impression on his mind than all his former good fortune, and his wee, wee grandmother's wisdom. Finding him silent, if not sulky, the old lady went to bed. The wee, wee candle (there were a hundred and twenty to the pound) burnt low, the fire was out, the dog and cat had followed the example of their old mistress, when suddenly Ben heard the chirp of a cricket.

"Whiz—buzz—down it came, down the chimney, its wings shivering, and its great eyes staring. Even while he looked at it, he saw the wings grow up, and, bright as silver, the body lengthen, the horns twist into a sort of crescent crown, and his fairy godmother stood before him."

"He was dreaming," said Ned, yawning.

"Not a bit of it," Master Edward.

"Then you *do* believe in fairies?"

"That has nothing to do with my story, darlint."

"Where did I leave off? Oh, his fairy godmother stood before him."

"Hush, nurse; is not that a step?"

Mistress Peggy got up, and looked out of the window.

"It's an old donkey, dear, rubbing its shoulder against the opposite seat—that's all."

"Go on, then, dear nurse."

"His fairy godmother stood before him," recommenced nurse for the third time. "'What's the matter with my son Benjy?' she inquired."

"'I want to be big, godmother.'"

"'That's impossible,' she answered. 'You come of a dwarfish race,—a Wee or a Little can *never* be Big.'"

“ ‘Then I want a big cabin.’

“ ‘A big cabin will have a big mouth. If you have a big cabin, you must have a big woman to keep it clean, and plenty of money to ‘plenish it.’

“ ‘I’ll marry a big wife.’

“ ‘If you do, it’s in your luck that she’ll whip you, and put you on the cross-beam while she drinks your tea and eats your potatoes.’

“ ‘Well, godmother, I’ll give up the big cabin and the big wife, if you’ll give me a big horse, and big cocks and hens, and big vegetables, and flowers.’

“ ‘Very well, little man ; for how long do you want them ?’

“ ‘For ever, if you please, godmother.’

“ ‘Ah, ah !’ laughed the fairy, as she twirled on the tip of her little big-toe. ‘Ah, ah, ah ! Oh—h ! Well, you shall have a high-trotting horse, and the largest Cochín-China cocks and hens in England, and, if you want a bed, cabbage-roses to sleep in. Ah, ah, ah !’

“ ‘But when, dear godmother—when ?’ exclaimed Ben ; for he saw she was rising to go out through a hole in the thatch of the cabin, which was made to *convanience* the smoke.

“ ‘To-morrow morning, my little man and godson.’

"The fairy was gone !

"Ben's grandmother woke Ben out of a sound sleep just as the first break of the morning was letting in light upon the world.

" 'Oh, my darlint,' she says, 'is this the last day? for there's a cock crowing thunder hard by. I never heard such a noise before ; and there's something plucking at the gable end of the cottage, where it is so overgrown with honeysuckles and roses, that I think it will soon be plucked away altogether. Wake up, my darlint boy, and see what the world's coming to !'

"The wee, wee dog kept on barking and growling, and the cat ran up the chimney. When Ben opened the door, instead of his pretty wee, wee fowl, up came a huge Cochin-China cock and his attendant hens. The cock was so tall that he could not get into the little hen-house, and he seemed in a bad temper, for he made a run at the wee, wee grandmother, and knocked the poor old lady down.

" 'It's only his courage, dear grandmother; never mind it. Think of what eggs his wives will lay—two a day ; and if we got a shilling for one of the wee eggs, what shall we get for these ?'

" 'Why there is an egg, I declare !' said the wee,

wee old lady; 'but two of those would fill my dozen-egg basket.'

"The cock bowed to Ben, and Ben, who would not be outdone in civility, bowed to the cock, who then as civilly asked for refreshment for himself and wives.

"The wee, wee grandmother gave them not only all she had prepared in the way of wet potatoes and plenty of skins for her old poultry, but everything in the house that was intended for their own morning's meal, and it was gone in a twinkling, and they hungry still!

" 'Whist, grandmother! here's the egg-huckster coming, and we'll engage with her about the eggs,' said Ben.

"After the usual greeting of 'the top of the morning to ye,' and 'Save ye kindly,' the egg-huckster said how she had a commission to give them a shilling each for every one of the dawsky eggs laid by their wee, wee hens; and Ben, in great exultation, showed her the big egg, and asked three shillings, because it was three times as big. The huckster laughed him to scorn, and said she could get the like of *that* all over the country for a penny—the others she wanted because of their rarity—and off she went.

“ ‘Do see what’s wrong in the stable-yard, Ben, dear,’ said the wee, wee grandmother, ‘for there’s another shake at the back gable—do see!’

“And there, sure enough, was poor Ben’s great ambition—a big horse, who, after eating all the honey-suckle and roses, had begun to devour the thatch of the house. He was a nice, good-tempered, easy-going beast, for he came up to Ben, and stooped his head down to him, as you often see a noble horse do to a little child. Ben tried hard to jump up to touch his nose, but it was no use; and when he looked at the breadth of the horse’s back, he felt afraid it would be difficult to get his legs across it. ‘Come,’ says he to the horse. The horse obeyed him; but in turning, his shoulder touched the old pony’s stable, and it fell in with a loud crash. Thus the beauty of their wee, wee cottage, and the pretty little stable it had taken Ben three months to build, were destroyed before sunrise. Still he felt some degree of pride in calling his grandmother’s attention to the horse.

“ ‘Oh, let me alone, agra,’ she cried, ‘that born baste of a cock has picked my little cat out of the chimney, and has swallowed it up, as if it was a worm. And that horse, Ben! What *do* you mean to do with it—how will you ever feed it—how will

you ever mount it? Oh, wurrusthrue! what have we done, at all at all, to be so punished with everything not fit for us? What signified the laugh of fools, as long as we were happy in ourselves? What did such 'go-by-the-grounds' as we are want of such giants? Oh, Ben, Ben! only think of a mouse in a lion's skin—or a wren with the tail of a peacock—or me on the Queen's throne (God forgive me!)—or you, darlint, in the priest's boots!

“‘A yarra! a wurrusthrue! Oh, it's ourselves that are ruinated entirely! Ah, then, sure it would be far more laughable to see you on the top of that great elephant of a horse than neat and tidy on your own darlint little pony. I know this is ye'r godmother's work; but you must have worried her into it. Oh, the folly of mankind, and their dirty, blind ambition—always wantin' more than they have, and evermore craving what's not fit for 'em. Oh, before we haven't a straw left on the roof or a bit in the world to eat, down on ye'r knees, Ben, and ax ye'r fairy godmother to forgive ye and let everything be as it used to be! Oh, my grief! to think the laugh of a drunken fool should turn you to folly! Oh, Ben!’

“‘I'm as sorry as you can be, gran'mother, and



I see that what's fit for one condition in life is not fit for another, and it's sorry and ashamed I am ! I see that we don't know what's fit for us, and I wish——'

"While Ben was speaking in repentance of his folly, the horse by degrees became smaller and smaller, until his own little pony stood whinnying beside him. The cock gave one of his gruff crows, and while he did so, the wee, wee cat jumped out of his mouth, and gradually, gradually, with his hens, he dwindled away into Ben's old feathered favourites. Floating down on a sunbeam, Ben's fairy godmother stood before him.

"'You must now,' she said, 'listen to my sermon, the only punishment I shall give you ; for though you have been foolish, you have not been obstinate. You listened to the laughter of a fool as if it had been words of wisdom. You were like the frog who tried to turn himself into a balloon, and burst ; you——' "

Mistress Peggy paused, and looked at Edward ; at last, he had fallen asleep. "Ah," she murmured, shaking her old head, "boy all over—*awake* to the story, and asleep to the *sermon*." And the good creature soon fell asleep herself.

## CHAPTER XIII.

"It will throw him back a month, my honourable master," said Mistress Peggy, shaking her head, and looking very unhappy. "The dear boy has not eaten an ounce of food since his friend disappeared. He trembles and changes colour at every step on the pavement; his imagination is the very ditto of his dear mamma's. I am sure I wish he had not brought his unruly friend with him."

"Wishes of that kind, my good Peggy, are worse than useless," said the general. "The boy Octavius is a fine boy, but dreadfully in want of training. Our schools, Peggy, require *discipline*. Just imagine what a folly it is to substitute reasoning for flogging, and see what must follow; conceive my standing at the head of my division, and calling up Private Jones, or Smith, to be reasoned with! No properly-trained boy would have dared to go off in such a manner. If there is law in the

land, I will punish that boatman. All I fear is, they will rob the poor boy, and then put him ashore somewhere not in the neighbourhood. From all I have heard from the police, the fellow with whom he went is a bad, unprincipled man,—more of a shark than a sailor; it may teach him a lesson, however.”

“But poor Master Edward, general?”

“Dacre must manage to divert his mind. I dare say we shall have tidings of Octavius before sunset. I have sent to the coast-guard stations, and despatched a boat from the pier. The police are on the alert, and a reward is offered; but do not tell Ned this, my good Peggy, because he is so anxious and nervous, that he might imagine, from such arrangements, his young friend was in actual danger.”

“God bless you, honoured general! Here comes Master Edward.”

“Well, my dear,” said his grandpapa, in a cheerful voice, “this, you see, is a lovely day,—a much finer day than your wilful friend deserved for his boating. I dare say he has bribed the greedy boatman to take him across the bay—perhaps to Old White Nose, or Corfe Castle, or to catch mackerel; and we shall have him turned out

with the fish on Pebble Ridge, or come strutting over the waves like the red cock of Portland."

"The red cock of Portland, grandpapa, what is that?"

"Master Dacre should have told you of the red cock of Portland long ago," said the general; "but, as he has not done so, I must; and, my good Mistress Peggy, it is so fine a day, that I beg you to invite Daddy Dacre to take a drive round the coast with Master Edward in the pony phaeton; perhaps they might see the boat returning: and drive to the Swanery—who knows but Octavius may be thrust in among the reeds, like a decoy-duck. Now, my grandson, while Peggy is so good as to give the order of the day, I will tell you about the cock of Portland.

"You know that there are a great many wonderful fossils and petrefactions found in the quarries of Portland; and I explained to you the other day the use and importance of the Breakwater, and promised you some day a peep into that jewel of a castle, which the governor of Portland, who is an old friend of mine, guards as if it was a great roc's egg. I wish he would permit daguerreotypes to be taken of the rooms,—they are full of interest and beauty; but, as Daddy Dacre

would tell you, the place for keeping high school is at the back of the island. Oh, Ned! such rocks, such cliffs, such lighthouses, such a sward for cantering,—just where I should like to review my old regiment; and the short, thick grass, covered with such multitudes of little snails! Daddy knows all their histories; but the charm of the whole, the *crème de la crème*—which means the richest of the rich—are the ruins of ‘Bow-and-Arrow Castle,’ said to have been built by William Rufus.”

Edward’s eyes dilated. “‘Bow-and-Arrow Castle,’ grandpapa! Oh, what a charming name!”

“And a no less charming place. There are the ruins of ‘Bow-and-Arrow Castle,’ and a fine old gateway leading to the rocks, and down to such a beautiful ruined churchyard, which I am sorry to say is half washed away by the sea. Poor shipwrecked sailors are buried there in great numbers, mingled with the unpolished inhabitants of the nearest village. Close to this ‘Bow-and-Arrow Castle,’ a gentleman named Penn, who was governor of the island once, built himself a house, which is called Pennsylvania Castle.”

“Please, grandpapa,” inquired Edward, “was

*that* the dear, good Quaker gentleman who went to America, and ruled the Indians by love, not war, and kept his word, and founded the city of Pennsylvania ? ”

“ No, it was his grandson ; and the place still bears his name. I have had serious thoughts of taking that place myself ; and if I did, I should try what I could do with the hardworking but ignorant inhabitants of Portland ; but I am old, Edward, and want energy.”

“ Grandpapa, would it not be nice to have an island of one's own, and establish schools, and try to make the people good ? Daddy Dacre has done much for some of the poor Portland boys ! ”

“ There is no human being so poor, or so helpless, but if he has a right-thinking mind he can do something to help his fellow-creatures—is not that a pleasant thought, Edward ? But I am forgetting the ‘ cock of Portland.’ ”

“ It was in the chilly month of November, in the year 1457, when Bow-and-Arrow Castle was in its strength and beauty, and was really garrisoned by men with the long-bow and the cross-bow—fellows who were as familiar with land as with water, and with water as with land. The bay beneath the churchyard afforded shelter to their boats, and the

most daring pirate hardly dared venture within the range of their slings or bows.

“The captain of the castle was, certainly, a great warrior—a fierce-looking *jarl*—and very fond of boasting. He used to say that nothing ever came within the reach of his long bow that should not speedily bite at the wave. He would stand on the highest battlement of his tower, and boast in a manner very unworthy of a hero. It was, as I have said, November, in the year 1457, and he had been shooting down the innocent gulls and guillemots, soiling the pure water of the ocean with the life blood of those beautiful creatures who undulate over the waves. Again and again he boasted that nothing could rise out of the waters, or float on the waters, that he could not destroy; when suddenly, directly opposite to him, arose out of the sea a great cock—first, up came the head, or rather the comb, like a coral reef—bright, bright scarlet, and the men exclaimed ‘it was a coral island;’ and it rose, and it rose; and then they saw the eyes, as bright as two lighthouses, flashing over the water; and then the beak, black and long, and strong as the captain’s bow; and then a beard, white and glistening, like a cataract: those who watched thought

the beard would never come to an end—and his tail was like a rainbow—and his wings, when he flapped them, were heavy and dangerous as thunder-clouds, and his legs massive as weaver's beams. And he strode upon the waters as upon dry land; and then he crowed, and the captain heard a sound in the crow that seemed to say, 'Shoot me, O slayer of gulls and guillemots!' And then he turned, and beckoned with his head, crowing each time, to the north, and to the south, and to the east, and to the west, and repeating, "Shoot me, O slayer of gulls and guillemots!" and each time the captain attempted to raise his bow his arm fell powerless by his side, and the cock, as it were, laughed him to scorn, because he was a braggart, and took innocent life in sport. All the garrison saw the cock of Portland, and after the fourth crow he sank into the ocean, and was seen no more."

"And the captain, dear grandpapa?"

"The captain repented of his cruelty, and ever after bore in mind that British arrows should only be discharged at Britain's foes, and not at the innocent creatures that were created free of earth, air, and water, by the Almighty power who maketh nothing in vain."



"But is it true, grandpapa?"

"Quite as true, my grandson, as 'Jack the Giant Killer,' 'Tom Thumb,' 'Daniel O'Rourke and the Eagle,' or, perhaps, the 'Forty Thieves!'"

"But Bow - and - Arrow Castle, and Pennsylvania——"

"Oh, my boy, all I have said of them is true, and things far more wonderful might be told about them. It is only the 'Cock of Portland' I class with 'Jack and the Beanstalk.'"

## CHAPTER XIV.

"INDEED, dear Daddy," said Edward, "I would rather drive about the coast—up and down, or over to Portland—than go to Abbotsbury without Octavius. I take no pleasure in anything—I can only think of him."

"But the general, Master Edward, wished you to go, and asked you to collect for him some swan-quills, and some of the blossoms of the beautiful reeds. Oh, Master Ned, what schools I have kept among those reeds! To show you half the natural curiosities of that place would take us there twenty times. Look, dear; there is a flight of those little birds they call *snorters*; they come chiefly to Portland in the foggy weather of March, and leave when the gray crow arrives, in October."

"Then I suppose they do not like gray crows."

"May be not," replied Daddy Dacre, laughing. "I remember we used to call them—that is, the *snorters* and the *gray crows*—French and English.

And there is one of the 'foolish guillemot divers ;' I think it wrong to call it the *foolish* guillemot. It sometimes unfortunately happens that things are called 'foolish' because of their goodness. It lays its egg, to be sure, on so unprotected a ledge of rock, that you wonder the egg does not roll off, or how the young bird can ever open its great, ugly bill without toppling over the precipice ; but the egg does *not* roll over, nor does the baby. Now the guillemot might be called 'foolish' for laying its egg in that situation ; yet people call her foolish, not because of her foolishness, but because of her fidelity. When sitting on that solitary egg, she will suffer herself to be taken 'by hand, rather than forsake her duty."

"Did you say, Daddy," inquired Edward, whose pre-occupied thoughts had prevented his hearing one word of Daddy's very just defence of Madame Guillemot—"did you say that the fishing-boats never remain longer than twenty-four hours at sea?"

"No, master ; because sometimes they remain double, and more than double, that time ; they can't go against time and tide, like the steamers ; and if the wind blows off the shore, they cannot come in to the land."

"Perhaps," exclaimed Edward with animation "the wind blows off the shore now."

"No, my dear young gentleman, it does not."

There was a long silence, unbroken, indeed, until they reached the pretty village of Chickerell; and Daddy, kindly as wisely, did not at that time wish to draw Edward's attention to the huge grave in the churchyard that contains the bodies of a number of poor sailors who perished in the shipwreck of the great ship the *Alexandre*.

When Edward asked a question, it had something to do with the going or coming of boats, or a desire to learn if any boy had ever been stolen away in a boat from his friends, and treated unkindly.

Daddy tried to turn his thoughts, and entered into a history of Abbotsbury—before they arrived at the old town—and got it down to the time of bluff King Harry the Eighth, who became the foe of all monastic institutions. The beautiful ruins scattered in every direction, and, above all, the situation of St. Catherine's Chapel, attracted Edward's attention for a moment, who wondered how Octavius would like it; and said that he (Octavius) would so enjoy running up the lovely green hill to the ruins.

At last, having secured the attendance of the

keeper, Edward was carried away from his own reveries by the novelty of the swanery and the decoy. Having unlocked a gate, they entered what has more the appearance of a maze—a puzzle formed of reeds, and withes, and green walks, and dykes filled with water—than anything else. In a hut near the entrance a man was busily employed making hurdles, which they place so as to prevent the ducks from escaping. The keeper said there were not more than five or six hundred swans there now, but that in old times the number varied from 1,500 to 8,000. The swanery and decoy then belonged to the abbots, who certainly took care of their “creature comforts” in this world. The swanery and decoy supplied them with game; and their tithe of all fish caught on the neighbouring beach gave them abundance of marine fish, their ponds yielding them supplies of those of the fresh water; while their possessions and manorial rights produced for them whatever they could desire. Edward was delighted by the soft turfy walks between the absolute forests of reeds. He listened to the music of the breeze as it whispered amid the reeds that waved their tufted blossoms as if to keep time with the zephyrs. There seemed no end to the walks, no end to the crossings and recross-

ings, no end to those little water-lanes where the wild ducks were beguiled to captivity and death by the art and cunning of their well-trained but heartless relatives ; and Daddy and the keeper conversed with much interest upon the sagacity of some of those wonderfully-trained ducks.

"I hate them !" exclaimed Edward vehemently. "I hate the nasty, sly things, with their little wicked eyes, for enticing and betraying the free-born ducks in that way ; it is wicked in them, and I wonder at you, Daddy, to praise them for it. Suppose some of our soldiers in India enticed their comrades into a pass, and betrayed them to Nana Sahib, what would you say ? "

"I would *say* nothing, Master Ned, but I would shoot them, as I would so many rats."

"Then shoot the decoy ducks ! "

"But they are not reasonable creatures."

"But *you* are, Master Keeper," persisted Edward, with more than usual spirit ; "and, say what you will, it is unnatural treachery. The Chinese put gourds on their heads, and steal in among the wild ducks, their concealed heads bobbing up and down as gourds would do with the swell of the water ; and then, when they get into the midst of the unsuspecting ducks, they pull


them suddenly under water by the legs. Now, *that* is treachery, but not as bad, nor as cowardly, as training one duck to entrap another. I don't like it; we ought not to set our wisdom against a poor duck!"

"But we do that in many ways, Master Edward."

"Then it is cowardly, Daddy. If I was a man, and strong, I would meet my equal, if he would be my enemy, face to face, and try strength with him. But to put my strength and reason against a feeble, brainless thing; why," he added, walking off in a state of indignation, "it is as bad as King John bribing Hubert to put out Arthur's eyes."

They were permitted to collect some swan's quills, and saw many of the stately birds sailing in the outer waters, or "guzzling" amid the tangled weeds for food—some tried to swallow eels and small fish, looking so meek all the time; while others ruffled up their feathers and arched their wings at the keeper's dog, who pattered and rustled about without seeming to mind them.

"Daddy," said Edward, "we must bring Octavius here. This gives me, somehow, the idea of an Indian jungle—these great, tall reeds, *matted* and tangled, look like what I have heard



him call 'jungle.' Octavius's father and mother were Indians."

"As wild as an Indian," murmured Daddy.

Now Daddy did not mean any harm by saying that; but Edward was nervous and excited, and it was a peculiarity in his noble and generous mind, that when any were in trouble, he was their advocate, if he could not be their protector.

"I don't think it is kind of you to say that of my friend *now*, Daddy Dacre. I do not think him a bit wilder than other boys; and, even if he was, this is not the time to remember it."

"I don't know how it is, Master Ned," said poor Daddy, "but I have been all this day very much in the same state as the wasp in the bee-hive!"

"How was that?"

"Discovered that he was in the wrong box. I have not said or done anything properly to-day."

"I dare say the fault is mine, Daddy—my heart is so full."

"Only a little pain in your temper, my dear master. I must not attempt to keep school here to-day, it would do no good. I hope the general will like the reed-blossoms."

"You are not angry with me, Daddy?" whispered Edward, stealing his hand into that of the



old man, and looking up into his face with tearful eyes.

"Angry, my dear darling! No, only grieved to see how you are fretting." They walked on and on, through those soft and shaded alleys, until at a sudden turning there stood before them Santy. There was a wild, painful expression in the boy's face, which made Edward turn pale and tremble; and even Daddy Dacre could only exclaim,—

"Well, Santy!"

"I knew you were here," said the panting boy; "and I saw by Master Edward, when he did not see me, how anxious he was—and so I got the short cut, to tell you that t'other young gentleman's got home."

"Octavius home!" faltered Edward. "Oh, thank God! Is he really at grandpapa's?"

"'Deed he is, sir. I saw him carried in meeself."

"*Carried in!*" repeated Edward. "Why was he *carried in?*"

"I can't just tell, master, because there was a crowd: he had a fall, or something,—tumbled, somehow."

"*Carried in!*" repeated poor Edward. "What

can it be, Daddy?—he could not be much hurt from a fall—a little fall, was it, Santy ; you saw him ?”

“ Oh, yes, master, I saw him, and heard him. I think he said ‘ Old fellow ’ to the coastguard-man.”

Edward laughed almost convulsively. “ There, Daddy, he cannot be much hurt. Santy saw his face, and heard him say ‘ Old fellow ’ to the coastguard-man. It was so like poor Octy to say ‘ Old fellow.’ Daddy, do walk faster. When we get into the phaeton, we shall soon dash home. His being a little hurt will not matter, so he is back. We will soon nurse him up ; and I know grandpapa is never angry with any one who is really hurt. I would rather be hurt twenty times than see grandpapa angry ; but I am used to pain, you know.”

“ I would rather have my hand cut off,” put in Daddy, “ than endure a gust of the general’s anger.”

Edward rushed on at a rate he had never attempted since his illness ; and Daddy lagged behind, to both hear and speak to Santy ; and then Santy disappeared. It was evident that a heavy cloud settled on Daddy’s brow, and the good-natured keeper also looked distressed.

Suddenly Edward turned round, and then called, "Daddy, where is Santy?"

"Just trotted back the short cut, Master Edward."

"Oh, Daddy, how ungrateful he must think me! I never thanked him for his kindness; we could have driven him home."

"Oh, Master Edward, what would the people have said to see Santy, the shrimp-boy, in General Poole's pony-carriage?"

"When a thing is right to be done, what matters what people say, Daddy? — besides, General Poole is above gossiping people: *he* need not care what they say."

"Well, Master Edward, I will not dispute that; but we must not turn Santy's head by over-indulgence; to ride with you, would do him no good, however kindly you might intend it."

"Very well,—I will talk that over another time. Here we are!—now, fly, ponies, fly, if you never flew before!"

All the way home Edward talked; his anxiety was relieved by words; he would not entertain the idea that Octavius was seriously injured; a sprained ancle would prevent his walking; it was very likely *to be a sprained ancle*; or he might have fallen,

and grazed his knees. Octavius was worse than any girl in one way ; if the slightest thing was the matter with him, he always fancied he must die ; he had no patience in sickness ; if he got a sore throat, he always declared he was suffocating ; if a head-ache, he was "in" for brain-fever ; if he cut his finger, he was certain to have lock-jaw, or bleed to death ; and the faces he made even at a little pill, were awful to behold. So he felt quite happy. Santy might have thought him very bad when, in fact, it was only a scratch. Strong, vigorous boys never endured pain like poor little delicate lads. "Dear Octy !—did Daddy think he would be able to ride Brittle to-morrow ?"

"Certainly not to-morrow."

"Well, the day after ?"

"No chance of it. And now, dear Master Ned, we are passing St. John's, and will be at the Esplanade in a minute. Keep as quiet as you can ; for though, please God, there is no danger, yet I fear Master Octavius is more hurt than you believe."

Edward found he could not spring up the steps ; his heart palpitated—his limbs trembled. The general himself opened the door.

"Here are the quills, dear grandpapa, and the reed-blossoms—such beauties ; and I know Octy

has returned; and you have forgiven him, grandpapa—I know you have; and he is not much hurt; and, please, may I go to him?”

“Yes, I have quite forgiven him, but you cannot go to him.”

“Why, dear grandpapa? tell me why. I will be very good and quiet. Oh, tell me why.”

His grandpapa led him into the library.


“Sit down, Edward. Your young friend has met with an accident; how it occurred I have yet to learn.”

“He will tell you the truth, grandpapa.”

“But he must not be questioned yet—his arm is broken—and the surgeon is with him now.”

Edward sprang up from his seat—in the same instant he would have fallen, but the general caught him—the little white lips quivered, and the great eyes struggled to remain open; some water revived him. Again and again he entreated the general to let him go to Octavius; promised not to speak, or move, or shed a tear, though tears were rolling like drops of summer rain down his cheeks.

Years seemed to pass over that sensitive boy's head while waiting for the surgeon to come down



stairs; the general could not resist the grasp of those little hands, and the half-articulate entreaty that, if he must not go to his friend, he might remain with his grandfather.

At last the surgeon entered. "A disagreeable fracture, general, very—I can discover no injury to head or spine, and yet he is so torpid. If it is only a slight concussion of the brain, he will be all right—at least, comparatively so—in a few days. I have given the necessary instructions, and will come again in two hours; but he must be kept without light or sound—not questioned, or indeed spoken to; and I think, in case of any change for the worse, his parents should be informed."

"He is an orphan," said the general.

"Poor boy!—his relatives."

"He has none!"

"But he is *my* friend!" said Edward, "and under grandpapa's roof. I know that nobody loves him as we do."

"You are, I am sure, a trusty friend," observed the surgeon, as he looked down upon the earnest, suffering face of poor Edward; "and though I never saw you before, and do not know who you are, my young friend, I must feel your pulse; why, child, you are trembling all over—and as for your

pulse, it is galloping like a race-horse. May I send him to bed, general, and prescribe a composing draught?"

"I will go to bed and swallow a dozen draughts, if you will only let me look at Octavius."

"Not to-day, my young friend—to-morrow, please God—and as I may soon require your services as *head nurse*, I think you will agree with me that you must take care of yourself, or you cannot do your duty."

## CHAPTER XV.

AND so Daddy Dacre told his beloved young master that he should not open "school" again that season. "What may be done next we can hardly tell, Master Edward," he said; "for who could believe that the fine-spirited, wilful youth, who stood on the prow of that old villain's boat, like a young sea-king, would be brought so low? Why, it's three weeks since he was carried home, and it was only yesterday he recognized you."

"And grandpapa says he will never be able to remember how it occurred."

"Never; because, you see, the wicked boatmen asked Master Octavius to 'treat' them, when they got to the landing near Bow-and-Arrow Castle—'treat' them to destruction, I call it—and then made the poor young gentleman drink with them; then he would climb the crag, they say, and fell. If they had brought him home at once, he would not have suffered half so much, but they were afraid, and the old rogue said he was the more



afraid, because the young gentleman's purse and watch were lost while he was in the water, and absolutely claimed a reward for saving him from drowning!—But his honour, the general, found it all out, and he will hardly show his face on this coast again, when his time is up."

"But, oh Daddy, to think of the trouble grandpapa's kindness brought into the house."

"No, Master Edward, your grandpapa's kindness brought no trouble into the house; it was Master Octy's wilfulness that brought trouble into the house. And as to the general, he's just been wonderful; he has never seemed impatient even, though I know he hates sickness, and Mistress Peggy never dare let him see a basin of gruel or arrow-root. But it was only the other evening Mistress Peggy asked me into her little parlour to keep the sago from 'lumping,' as she called it, by stirring it round, while she went to the poor sick boy, to raise him in bed; well, I moved it about and about, and suddenly a knock came sharp to the door,—'Come in,' I said, and in walked your grandpapa.

"'I thought Mistress Peggy was here,' said the general. 'And what are *you* doing, Dacre?'

"'If your honour pleases, I'm keeping the sago

from *lumping*, until Mistress Peggy comes back; for your honour gave the servants leave to go to the regatta.'

" 'Then, instead of keeping school you are keeping hospital, Dacre? '

" 'Your honour,' I said, 'an hospital is the finest school that is ever entered by man or woman.'

" 'You are right, Dacre,' said his honour. 'If going to school means going to learn, we cannot take a walk, or enter a house—much less an hospital—without going to school. But, look to your charge—you are overloaded.'

" And, sure enough, the thing was boiling over. And the general, God bless him, lifted off Mistress Peggy's silver saucepan with the tongs, and, as she came in, she saw the general holding it at arm's length—I thought she would have dropped, Master Edward.

" 'There,' he said, setting it down on the trevet, 'never too old to go to school, Mistress Peggy! '

Indeed, the current of young life,—ebbing, as it were, and flowing,—which, though it caused the general so much anxiety, brought with it a new set of thoughts and ideas; his long dormant sympathies were fully awakened, and, moreover, the study of his grandson's pure, unselfish, and beautiful nature

afforded him so much cause for hope and thankfulness, that his heart was lifted higher and higher to God in earnest gratitude.

He was not much given to express his feelings, but he did once say to Mistress Peggy, that, doubly dear as Master Edward was to him,—being the son of his daughter and his only nephew,—still, there was a time when, crushed as the child seemed by his accident, he should have been almost thankful for his death.

He did hear Mistress Peggy murmur, “Why then, the Lord forgive yer honor for that pride.”

“I hope He will forgive me, for, as you say, it was ‘pride ;’ but I am punished—not in the usual way of punishment, but by showing me what ill judges we are of all things, and how little we can tell what blessings in disguise wait upon us. I have been taught humility—taught how little I know, and how much I must trust to Him who knoweth all things. My grandson will never be able to lead heroes to a battle of war, but he will be able to show how victories can be won, and not wasted, in the affairs of life.”

Edward's attention to his erring friend endeared him still more to his grandfather. Neither of the boys returned to school until after the Christmas

vacation. The recovery of Octavius was slow and uncertain: his arm never recovered its flexibility; and though his spine was uninjured, his head, the surgeon discovered, narrowly escaped a peril that might have deprived him of reason for the remainder of his days. And all this suffering to himself, and anxiety to others, arose from a desire to gratify his own impulses, without consulting those who knew better than himself. I must say he was earnestly grateful, and amply did Edward repay to his once strong and buoyant friend the affection and care he had received from him.

Octavius was fruitful in good resolutions, and had abundant leisure for thoughtfulness. It was wonderful how Edward, when recovered from the shock of the accident which almost destroyed his friend's life, gained health and strength; before Christmas he was able to manage Brittle, and Octavius was very glad to be permitted to creep up on the fat firm back of Fairy, and allow her to go her own pace, which was none of the quickest.

It was Christmas Eve, and the general told Edward that on that very evening Daddy Dacre might perhaps keep school under the branches of a Christmas tree, in his library.

Octavius had grown tall and thin ; Edward taller too, but decidedly stout and rosy. The tall boy was leaning on the stout one when the library door was thrown open, and there certainly blazed a Christmas tree, all light and sparkling, after the most approved, modern, and now English fashion ; there, too, was Daddy Dacre, but looking more like a pupil than a teacher. Suddenly there was a spring and a howl, and both the boys exclaimed—" Oh, Ponto ! " " Oh, darling Ponto ! " " Down, old fellow ! " " Oh, Ponto, my arm ! "

" Oh ! " said Edward, " here is our own dear master, the doctor, and Jones, and one, two, three other of our school-fellows. Oh, grandpapa ! and never to tell us. Oh, how happy I am ! "

A strange change was that which had taken place in these two boys ! The little pale, delicate fellow, whom the kind doctor had so cherished and cared for, when—but we must not recapitulate ; the little pale, delicate boy, now flushed with health and happiness, was rushing from one to the other, all joy, all delight—now hanging round the doctor's neck, then embracing the firm, erect form of grandpapa—then hugging Ponto, and dragging him with *might and main* to make acquaintance with Daddy Dacre. Octavius, the strong, brave, spirited boy,

now bent, and thin, and worn, struggling against his weakness, and at last rushing out of the room to conceal a burst of tears he could not suppress!

"I think, your honour," said Daddy, "and you all, honourable gentlemen, and my dear young master, this is THE BEST SCHOOL OF THE SEASON!"

THE END.

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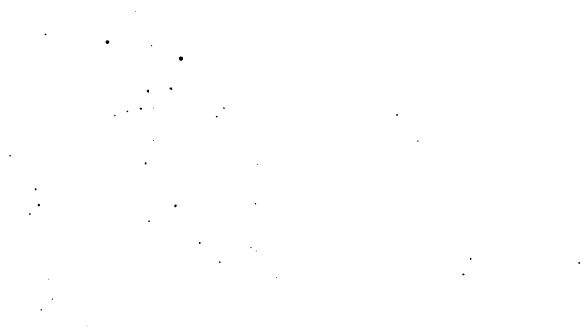
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